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ABSTRACT

Information is presented on enrollment management for adult students. Papers presented at various seminars on the subject are compiled as follows: "Enrollment Management: College Recruitment Philosophy for the Eighties" (Don Hossler); "Enrollment Management Without Adult Students: Only Half the Story" (Carol B. Aslanian); "Avoid Detroit's Mistakes: Reposition Your Institution to Respond to Adults" (Lawrence N. Smith and Rita Abent); "Develop a Powerful Data Base Management System for Your Institution" (John McIlquham); "University of Massachusetts at Boston Creates New Enrollment Services" (Douglas Hartnagel); "Syracuse University Fits Enrollment Management into Its Academic Mission" (Thomas F. Cummings); "College of Charleston's Reorganization Produces Successful First Year" (Sue A. Sommer-Kresse); "Surprising Survey Results About Recruiting Reentry Women Students" (Linda Felicetti); and "Kansas Universities' Support Systems Help Nontraditional Female Students" (Julianne Ducommun Cooper and Robert J. Mattox). The College Board's Office of Adult Learning Services, which connects institutions to adult students, is described, noting its technical services, training, and publications. (SM)

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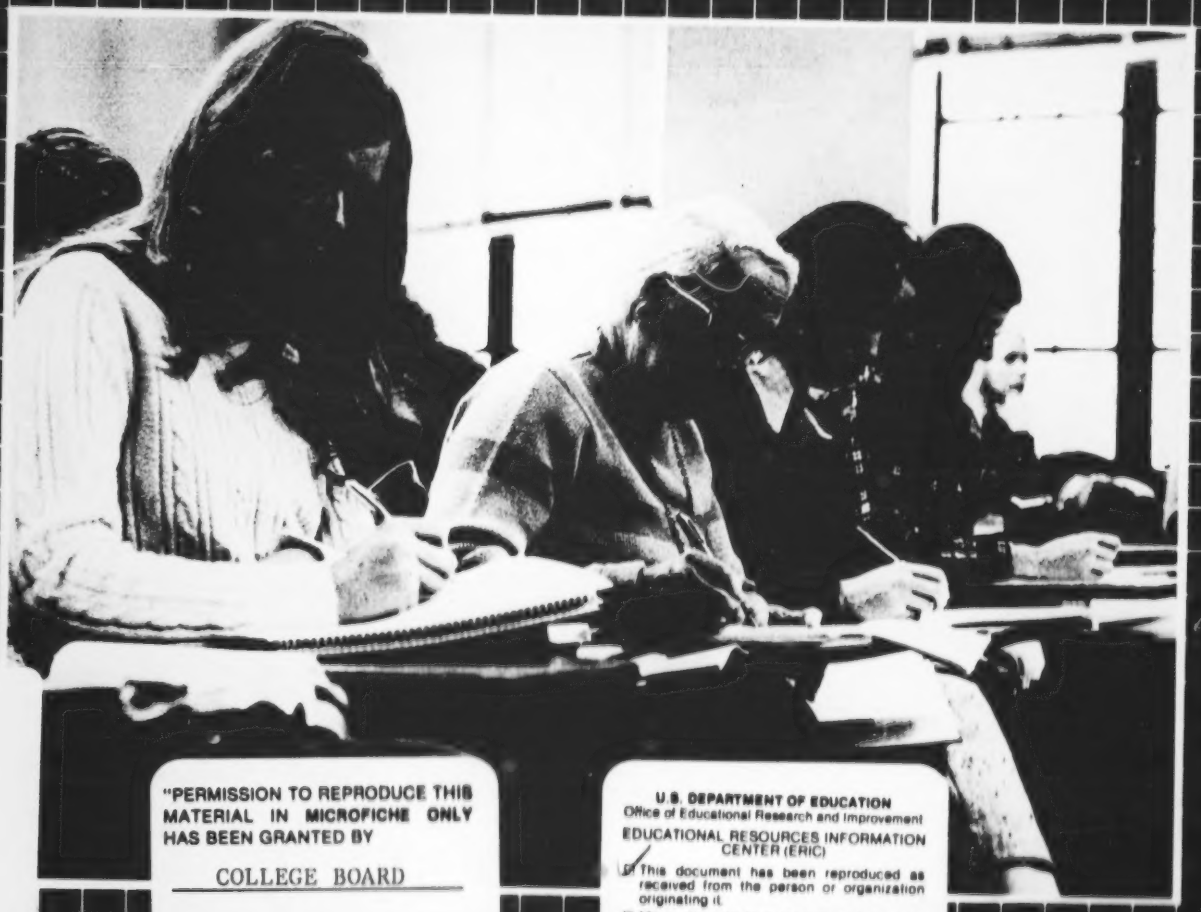

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THE COLLEGE BOARD

No. 11: Enrollment Management and Adult Students

THE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIST

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THE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIST

RECRUITING IN THE 1980s

College Entrance Examination Board
New York

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INTRODUCTION

What do you think of when you hear "enrollment management"? If you're familiar with the term and its implications for your undergraduate student populations, consider how effective your enrollment management systems are for adult students.

Enrollment management involves the planning, coordination, and integration of traditionally independent collegiate activities associated with recruiting, enrolling, and retaining *all* students. Unfortunately, policies and services for nontraditional students may be scattered about the campus, with no one office or person responsible for evaluating all programming for adults. Within this nonstructure, services for adults are not given priority in the management of student enrollments.

The College Board's Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS) has taken steps to help educators not only embrace the process of enrollment management but to incorporate attracting and servicing adult students into that process. Through OALS, leading practitioners from institutions that have developed integrated comprehensive approaches to the concept of enrollment management were asked to share their ideas and proven methods through seminars. These seminars, *Enrollment Management and the Adult Student*, are offered every fall and permit an exchange of ideas among those in attendance. The majority of the articles in this issue of *The Admissions Strategist* are a compilation of the ideas shared by these professionals.

If you're wondering why adults should be given more priority, the projections speak for themselves. It has been widely written that the demographics in the 1980s and 1990s are changing. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that, by 1990, there will be 1.5 million *fewer* youths between the ages of 16 and 24 than in 1984. Also by 1990, one third of the nation's population will be in the 25-to-45 age group, the years considered to be the primary adult learning years. These changes in the composition of the potential student market will impact on colleges' strategies and enrollments. We hope the information in this issue, cosponsored by the Office of Adult Learning Services, will help you incorporate adults within your enrollment planning structure.

- "To effectively influence adult student enrollments, collegiate administrators should be attentive to three distinct but interdependent perspectives of the enrollment management concept . . . the operational perspective, the strategic perspective, and the distinctive perspective," says Don Hossler, Assistant Professor at Indiana University. In his article, he introduces us to the concept of enrollment management and the important role adult students serve.

- How can the nation's 3,400 colleges and universities maintain stable enrollments in the midst of projected traditional student enrollment declines? What role will the adult student play in permitting many colleges to maintain or increase student enrollments? Carol Aslanian, Director of the Office of Adult Learning Services at the College Board, writes that "Adults are for many institutions as vital a component to enrollment success as the traditional-aged population." In her article, she provides the whole story about enrollment planning for adults.

- "Higher education can learn from the auto industry's mistakes," suggest Laurence Smith and Rita Abent of Eastern Michigan University. Mr. Smith, Vice President for University Marketing, and Ms. Abent, Director of Marketing Media, explain, "Detroit ['s auto industry] believed it was invincible, that its markets would last forever. [It] ignored consumers who clamored for new products to meet their changing needs." Does this sound like the position many colleges take as they attempt to fit nontradi-

tional students into the same mold as traditional students, completely ignoring special servicing needs? These authors explore opportunities to help you begin the process of repositioning your college to meet new consumer demands.

- "Datastore" is the concept used by John McIlquham, Director of Advertising at the Gallup Organization, to highlight the importance of data collection and use. He emphasizes the power of data for a range of tasks, from selecting student markets and developing cost-efficient direct-response advertising to course design.

- The University of Massachusetts at Boston has taken the rhetoric about enrollment management and servicing adults and established a responsive organizational model. Dean of Enrollment Services Douglas Hartnagel describes his institution's success in attracting adults through a university-wide commitment to services and policies that meet adults' needs. His new central enrollment services office really works!

- Thomas Cummings outlines the steps taken at Syracuse University to embrace the concept of enrollment management. With examples of traditional undergraduate recruitment strategies, Mr. Cummings writes about similar applications with part-time students. He shows the interrelationships between the goals and interests of the faculty and administrators, the needs of the students (traditional and nontraditional), and the necessity of campuswide commitment to influence student enrollments.

- From a solid research base, Dr. Sue Sommer-Kresse, Vice President for Enrollment Management, shares with us the steps taken to build an enrollment management team and establish college-wide goals. She reports, "Enrollment management administrators may be perceived initially as too concerned with numbers and statistics. However, if the focus of attention and concern is on the student, the enrollment management goals address the quality of the campus experience, student performance and retention and, most importantly, student assessment and outcomes."

- In addressing the issues of recruiting reentry women, Linda Felicetti, Assistant Professor of Marketing at Clarion University, defines "reentry women" as those 25 years of age or older who interrupted their formal education and are now enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program. She describes the findings of a study conducted with 25 Pennsylvania colleges and universities to identify *marketing practices* utilized to recruit traditional students and reentry women.

- At Emporia State University, Julianne Ducommun Cooper, Student Employment Counselor, and Robert Mattox, Assistant Director for the Bureau of Educational Measurement, report on the findings of research that surveyed colleges and universities in central Kansas about reentry women. Their objective was to identify *support systems* to service this student group.

Special thanks to the staff of the Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS), which includes Elena Morris, OALS Conference Director; Brian O'Reilly, Assistant Director; and Carol Aslanian, Director, for identifying the need for this information and for their support with this special issue. To provide you with a better idea of how the staff of OALS can help you identify and integrate adult students into the mainstream of your institution, we have included a brief description of available OALS publications and services. Please use the enclosed response card to obtain more information.

Put adult students into your enrollment management plans!

Joyce E. Smith
Director
Student Search Service

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT: COLLEGE RECRUITMENT PHILOSOPHY FOR THE EIGHTIES

Don Hossler

The concept of *enrollment management* is becoming increasingly attractive to college and university administrators. In an era of heightened competition for students, enrollment management conveys a sense of greater institutional control over student enrollments. In the last few years, several articles, monographs, books, and conferences have dealt with enrollment management. Most of these publications and meetings, however, have focused on attracting and retaining traditional students. Few of these meetings and publications have been directed toward managing adult student enrollments. As we know, however, adult students have become a significant part of postsecondary enrollments.

Enrollment management has become associated with a diverse set of activities that colleges and universities are employing to control the characteristics of their enrolled student body or the total number of enrolled students. Enrollment management is both a process and a concept. It can be defined as:

> Both an organizational concept as well as a systematic set of activities designed to enable educational institutions to exert more influence over their student enrollments. This is accomplished by the use of institutional research in the areas of student college choice, student attrition, and student outcomes to guide institutional practices in the areas of new student recruitment and financial aid, student sup-

port services, as well as curriculum development and other academic areas that affect the enrollment and persistence of students.

Three Perspectives of Enrollment Management

Enrollment management is a complex concept, however, and cannot easily be described as simply functions of offices such as admissions, financial aid, career planning, and orientation.

In order to effectively influence adult student enrollments, collegiate administrators should be attentive to three distinct but interdependent perspectives of the enrollment management concept: the operational perspective, the strategic perspective, and the distinctive perspective. Each of these perspectives will be examined briefly in the context of adult student enrollments.

The Operational Perspective

The operational perspective addresses enrollment management at the level of personnel, structural, and support systems. In this era of strategic planning and information systems, we are often encouraged to overlook the importance of people and organizational structure, yet these are extremely important elements of any enrollment management system. At the operational level, colleges and universities should make sure they have personnel in offices such as admissions, financial aid, institutional research, and student services who can:

- Conduct market research studies on the college choice process of adult students
- Devise sophisticated marketing strategies
- Conduct sound evaluations of our activities
- Operate computer hardware and software systems necessary to track and communicate with adult students from the initial point of inquiry through to program completion.

The operational perspective also addresses questions of cooperation and structure among administrative units. Kemerer, Baldridge, and Green* proposed four organizational models for enrollment management systems:

- The marketing committee
- The enrollment management coordinator
- An enrollment management matrix
- The enrollment management division.

There is no ideal enrollment management model. What may be more important than the model each campus develops is the amount of cooperation among the administrative units whose activities can have an impact upon student enrollments.

On many campuses the offices of admissions and the campus retention function operate independently. Sometimes they are not even housed in the same administrative unit. The admissions offices may report to the academic vice-president, and the institutional retention efforts may be housed in the office of the vice-president for student affairs. Although this may not seem like a problem, the admissions office is sometimes so concerned about recruiting a sufficient number of students that it may recruit students who are not likely to "fit" and to succeed at the campus. When large numbers of students do not persist, it is often the assigned task of the student affairs division to improve campus retention rates. Thus, admissions and retention offices should work closely together. It is equally important that the offices of financial aid, academic advising, and orientation also be an integral part of any enrollment management efforts, yet on some campuses each of these offices is housed in a separate administrative division. This is not necessarily a problem if such offices can establish a constructive working relationship in which they cooperate across functional divisions toward common goals.

On other campuses, the development of a collaborative work style has been facilitated by structurally linking two or more offices together that have an impact on student enrollments. For instance, the offices of admissions and financial aid might be merged into one centralized enrollment management division. From an operational perspective, the important point is to have cooperative relationships among key administrative offices that influence student enrollments.

Computer support systems are essential for effective enrollment management efforts. Successful student recruitment requires communication not only about academic programs and student life but about financial aid awards as well. Miami Dade Community College has developed an academic tracking system that automatically identifies students who are not progressing toward graduation, as well as at-risk students who are succeeding and should be praised for their success. A computer hardware and software system is essential to make "personalized communication" with prospective and currently enrolled students possible.

From an operational perspective, an enrollment management system must address personnel and support systems, as well as questions of structure and cooperation. The operational perspective does not stand in isolation from the strategic and distinctive perspectives. For instance, a strategic decision to move from an admissions process that emphasized media advertising to one that emphasizes targeted mass mailings will impact on the operational perspective. Do we have the necessary computer hardware and software? Do we have staff members with expertise in direct-mail marketing techniques?

* F. R. Kemerer, J. V. Baldridge, and K. C. Green, *Strategies for Effective Enrollment Management* (Washington, D.C.: American Association of State Colleges and Universities), 1982.

The Strategic Perspective

The strategic perspective emphasizes the search for a match between the institution and the external environment. The strategic perspective has two foci:

1. What factors are, or might become, associated with new student enrollments?
2. What factors are associated, or might become associated, with student persistence?

Salient questions that might be associated with new student enrollments can be categorized into two sets of questions. Table 1 emphasizes strategic decision making for both existing new student markets and for new sources of new matriculants.

In an enrollment planning model, the strategic perspective also addresses the issue of student persistence. The theoretical and applied research on student attrition provides guidelines for this element of an enrollment planning model. Table 2 lists relevant questions about student retention.

One of the essential prerequisites of the strategic perspective is information. Strategic marketing decisions and effective retention programs are driven by information. Without such information, strategic decision making is reduced solely to intuition. As Cyert has suggested:

> Management science will always remain an art, in part at least, but through an analytic approach, the management scientist will be able to reduce the extent of the dependence on "seat of the pants judgment."*

The Distinctive Perspective

Both the operational and the strategic perspectives convey a strong sense of managerial control. That is, through careful analysis of the internal and external environments, colleges and universities can shape their futures. The distinctive perspective relies less on managerial planning and foresight and more on managerial hindsight—upon the ability of managers to recognize a good thing when it has occurred and capitalize upon it. The distinctive perspective posits that perceptions of quality and institutional distinctiveness are important determinants of student college choice and student persistence. This would suggest that all that institutions need to do in order to increase enrollments is to improve their quality and distinctiveness. Both quality and distinctiveness are relative terms that are difficult to define or quantify. Does quality mean the same thing to a degree-seeking inner-city adult student choosing between a community college and a local branch campus of the state university as it does to a middle-class woman who is interested in taking a class for personal development? Does distinctiveness have the same attributes for a nontraditional adult student and a recent high school graduate? We know from institutional rankings that perceptions of institutional quality change slowly during long periods of time. Thus, how does an institution enhance its perceived quality or alter its distinctive characteristics among applicants and matriculated students?

From the distinctive perspective, enrollment management systems require opportunistic retrospective sensemaking. What has happened at institutions such as Northeast Missouri State University or Alverno College are good examples of the distinctive perspective at work. Both institutions have been able to create a national

* R. M. Cyert, "Management Science and University Management," in J. A. Wilson (ed.), *New Directions in Higher Education: Management Science Applications to Academic Administration* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981).

TABLE 1. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

Characteristics of Enrolling Student Market Segments	Characteristics of Potential Student Market Segments
Based upon past enrollment data, what adult enrollment trends can we anticipate in the future?	What future demographic and economic trends may impact on our adult enrollments and what are those effects likely to be?
How can our currently enrolled adult students be segmented into meaningful markets?	Can we identify new adult student markets we might serve?
What are the salient characteristics of those market segments?	What are the characteristics of these new adult student markets?
What educational and noneducational options are the primary competitors for our adult student market segments?	What are the educational and noneducational options we would be competing with in these new adult student markets?
Are these policies we might consider that would enable us to attract a larger proportion of any of the adult market segments we already attract?	What policies would we need to adopt in order to attract the students from these new adult markets?
Are there likely sources of students similar to the adult market segments we already attract?	
What would we have to do to attract adult students from these new sources of students?	

TABLE 2. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH STUDENT PERSISTENCE

What is our current adult student attrition rate?
What is the model number of semesters or years that most adult students take to graduate?
How does our adult student attrition rate compare with similar institutions?
Can we disaggregate our persisting and our withdrawing adult students into meaningful subgroups?
What are the salient characteristics and experiences of those adult student subgroups who persist and those who withdraw?
Are there nonacademic programmatic interventions that could reduce our adult student attrition rates?
Are there academic programmatic interventions that could reduce our adult student attrition rates?
Are we expending a significant amount of institutional resources to recruit any adult student subgroups who do not have high persistence rates after they arrive? If yes, why?

image of quality and distinctiveness. In Alverno's case, a competency-based curriculum has garnered national attention for the college. It was successful. But Mars Hill College and Sterling College also have competency-based curriculums, yet they have not attracted the national attention that Alverno College has. Northeast Missouri State University was one of the institutions that field tested the ACT COMPS program. Several other institutions were also part of that field test group, but do you remember who they were? In the case of Alverno and Northeast Missouri, insightful institutional leaders have been able to look over their shoulders and recognize "a good thing." These leaders were able to attach themselves to competency-based education and educational assessment and use these as symbols to define quality and distinctiveness to relevant constituencies.

The most important aspect of the distinctive perspective may be managers' ability to perceive institutional outcomes that can be legitimately associated with quality and distinctiveness and use these outcomes as symbols of excellence. The word *attach* may be a useful image for the distinctive perspective: Enrollment planners need to continually look over their shoulders to see if they can find anything to *attach* themselves to. It is difficult for most American colleges and universities to intentionally create an image of quality quickly. It may be easier to be constantly searching for excellence wherever it occurs and to attach the institution to it when it does occur.

An Integrated Enrollment Planning Model

The operational, strategic, and distinctive perspectives on enrollment planning are not mutually exclusive nor are they hierarchical. Each perspective addresses a different aspect of enrollment planning. Strategic decisions about academic programs or new marketing techniques may raise new questions at the operational perspective. Unanticipated outcomes may emerge that are then marketed in a strategic way to enhance the institution's image. Each perspective represents different views of the institution and the factors that affect enrollments.

A Report Card for Systems to Manage Adult Students

Using the operational, strategic, and distinctive perspectives, I can now ask the question, "How effective are enrollment management systems for adult students?" In institutions that have separate adult student divisions, it is my impression that college administrators charged with the responsibility for adult student enrollments are ahead of their colleagues who work with traditional-age student populations in many areas. However, there are also areas in which adult student divisions can improve.

From an operational perspective, adult student divisions are more likely to have a centralized organizational structure in which activities such as marketing, advising, and course scheduling are located in one administrative office. The historical fact that many traditional academic administrators "distanced" themselves from the problems and concerns of adult students has given adult educators great latitude in creating organizational structures that are "one stop" centers to meet the needs of adult students. On many campuses, cooperation between the admissions, financial aid, and advising functions is more apparent in adult student divisions. Because of their step-child status, however, adult student divisions also tend to be underfunded. As a result, they frequently do not have some of the necessary computer systems and personnel to implement all aspects of an enrollment management system. This inhibits their effectiveness.

From the strategic perspective, enrollment management systems in adult student divisions usually have a more mixed record. Although most adult student divisions market their programs effectively, they frequently lack a strong research component. Strategic planning requires internal and external environmental scanning that has a strong research base. Because marketing efforts in adult student divisions tend to rely heavily on intuition and past experience, campuses may not be well positioned to anticipate changes in the adult market.

It is difficult to determine the extent to which enrollment management systems targeted at adult students have applied the distinctive perspective to their efforts. Many institutions have intuitively sought publicity for their adult student programs. When an 83-year-old grandfather earns a degree, or a mother and daughter graduate at the same time, campus administrators have capitalized upon these events to draw attention to their adult student programs. However, because of a lack of high-quality research on college choice among adult students, we know very little about the attributes adult students ascribe to quality institutions. We know very little about how competition among institutions for a geographically bound adult population affects their enrollment decisions. For these reasons, it is difficult to be certain how strategies may affect adult enrollments.

The Future

In many respects, those concerned with traditional student enrollments can learn much from administrators who are concerned with adult student enrollments. Enrollment managers in adult education programs, however, cannot afford to rest on their laurels. At the very time that the traditional-age student population will hit its steepest decline, financial aid awards seem to be shrinking, which may further reduce the number of traditional-age students going to college. In addition, proportionately fewer traditional-age minority students are electing to pursue a postsecondary education. As a result, colleges and universities are likely to turn to adult student enrollments to make up for any loss in traditional-age student enrollments. This will take place at the very time that adult student enrollments are leveling off.*

On some campuses, enrollment managers in adult student divisions have been almost singlehandedly responsible for any enrollment stability or growth that institutions have experienced. Nevertheless, without more attention to the strategic and distinctive elements of enrollment management, many adult student divisions may find it difficult to continue to offset the declining number of traditional-age college students.

In a growing number of institutions across the country, adult enrollment management is being merged into the overall enrollment management process. Several of the articles in this publication describe organizational models that have been developed to include adult students in the overall, campus-wide enrollment management system. It remains to be seen whether a centralized or decentralized approach to adult enrollment management will prove to be more effective.

* Carol Frances projects just a 1 percent increase in adult student enrollments during the rest of this decade (see *AAHE Bulletin*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 1984).

About the Author

Don Hossler is Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs at Indiana University. He is the author of two books on enrollment management and a frequent contributor to scholarly journals on college admissions.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT WITHOUT ADULTS: ONLY HALF THE STORY

Carol B. Aslanian

As an outcome of predicted enrollment declines, and as an answer to improving the retention of already enrolled students, enrollment management brings direction and efficiency to the tasks of finding, recruiting, admitting, and keeping students. Enrollment management can do that best if it recognizes fully—and accepts—the diversified nature of today's higher education student body and expends the necessary resources to maintain and extend that diversity. The largest, most critical component of that student body is the adult student: those persons 25 years of age or older who return to school at some later time in their lives to acquire the knowledge and skills essential to cope with life changes. Given that enrollment operations for adult students on college campuses are in their embryonic stages, now is the time to consider seriously how enrollment management should deal with adult students.

The importance of incorporating the adult student enrolled in credit programs into the enrollment management process becomes evident by studying the current enrollment patterns in colleges today. To fail to do so, we believe, would ignore the close to 50 percent of all college students in this country who, for so many colleges, make the difference between retrenchment and stability.

The Setting

College enrollments are holding up better than would be expected given the steady decline in the number of high school seniors graduating each year. Why? This

unexpected pattern has not been well explained. Colleges point to their own attractiveness and to more aggressive, more skillful marketing strategies as reasons for their success. Although these are appealing explanations, they cannot explain the nationwide relative stability in college enrollments. To be sure, most colleges cannot be maintaining or enlarging their share of a shrinking market. Rather, what is happening is that most individual colleges are *not* enlarging their share of the shrinking high school market. Some of them are simply keeping a stable share of that market, others are facing a decline, and very few are expending extraordinary efforts to increase that share. If this is true, how then can the nation's 3,400 colleges and universities overall maintain stability in their enrollments?

The answer most certainly has to be new or expanded markets for these colleges—people going to college now who have not gone before. For some colleges, the new entrants are greater numbers of high school seniors who are choosing to go to college when they would not have gone before (i.e., some colleges are digging deeper into the ability barrel). For many colleges, it is the adult population who is going to college now in larger numbers than before. The 1987 *Digest of Educational Statistics* reported that, between 1970 and 1985, the enrollment of students under age 25 increased by 15 percent, and the enrollment of students age 25 and older rose 114 percent.

For so many institutions, adults are as vital a component to enrollment success as the traditional-age population. Many of them are being "recruited" increasingly by the regular college admissions staff, and many of them are being mainstreamed into the regular operations of the college. At the same time, and not surprising, schools or divisions of continuing education and other college units designed to address adults' needs are "losing" their responsibilities for the adult market because adult students are becoming too important a commodity to the regular divisions of the institution.

Given that the increase in adult students explains the unexpected stable enrollment being enjoyed by so many institutions across the country, it is extremely important that enrollment management staff be able to identify the adult source fully. Depending on who a college is attracting and retaining, the college would act differently in regard to how it recruits, admits, and serves students. For example, a college would be required to expand its recruitment techniques from those concentrating on the high school setting to those that include the household setting, the work setting, and the community at large. College recruiters would need to supplement their standard catalogs of standard messages designed for the 18 year old with attractive fliers and brochures designed for the 30 year old and containing messages that could be mailed to households and employers. The college also would have to extend college days from the high school cafeteria to the company cafeteria, to locating financial aid not only from government sources but from private sources (particularly aid available from tuition reimbursement opportunities in the private sector). Other changes would be required as well. Admissions standards and procedures would need to be examined so that adults' potential for college performance could be assessed and proper placement advice could be given. Admissions staff may need evidence that adults measure up to requirements of the college, perhaps by means of new measurement tools, and that adults also bring with them other credentials of potential: work performance, performance in the military, previous academic performance. Finally, enrollment management staff would have to understand that adults require student services to help them succeed at college—counseling, advisement, and academic support, with some consideration of where they have been, what they have accomplished, and what they want to achieve.

Adults are too important a clientele for colleges to leave enrollment practices to chance. Their raw numbers, combined with their seriousness of study, make them an important part in enrollment management operations.

Adults in College Credit Programs

The College Board's Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS) recently completed an investigation of how adults study in college credit programs. What we found out was that adult students are more numerous and more serious than current assumptions would have us believe.

Larger Numbers of Adult Students

National figures of higher education enrollments underestimate the numbers of adults on college campuses annually, because many adults enter and exit programs continuously throughout the 12-month academic calendar, and because some adults are enrolled in programs outside the purview of those who record enrollments. College enrollments are taken in October. Although many adults study then, they also study before and after that month. Some adults are enrolled in nontraditional programs (e.g., contract programs with businesses; off-campus and extension programs; courses delivered by correspondence, through television, or on an independent basis), and the numbers of adults in these programs do not always catch up with the registrar process. The College Board study gathered information from a sample of adults 25 years of age or older and found that 4.3 percent of them had engaged in college credit study during the previous 12 months. Applying that 4.3 percent to the 147 million adults who were 25 years of age or older in 1985 produces a total of more than 6 million adult credit students for that year. The figures of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) are closer to 5 million, due to reasons such as those cited above.

If it is to better understand the potential for adult learning on a given campus, enrollment management must understand the "flow of traffic" on that campus. It must understand what is happening during the entire 12-month academic year, not only what is happening in October. It seems clear that any enrollment management unit that does not account for the millions of adults identified in the College Board study is missing untold opportunities to embellish its overall enrollment.

Seriousness of Study Among Adults

The College Board study went on to document the ways in which the adults pursued their credit interest. It found:

- 50 percent of the adults studied during the day, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- 60 percent of the adults were enrolled in degree programs.
- 25 percent of the adults studied full time.
- 30 percent of the adults were enrolled in graduate programs.

In short, adults behave very much like the students so many colleges search for in that they, too, occupy—are able to fill up—day classes, stay around long enough to meet degree requirements, take up significant course loads (25 percent of full-time study among adults is even more impressive if we compare it to the decreasing numbers of traditional-age students who are studying full time), and participate heavily in prestigious, challenging graduate programs.

Time invested by enrollment management units to attract and retain adults on campus is time well spent. Adults can, indeed, supplant dwindling numbers of recent high school graduates.

Need for Better Understanding

One problem enrollment management may face is lack of information about the marketplace from at least two perspectives.

First, enrollment management needs to understand what types of adults in what numbers the college is already attracting. The unit needs information about the ways these adults have chosen to pursue their study: full time or part time, day or evening, in special programs designed for adults or in mainstreamed programs, etc. Also, some assessment of the adults' opinions about how well the college is meeting their educational objectives and dealing with their personal needs can be used constructively. These data can help identify ways to attract larger numbers of the kinds of adults the college is already able to attract.

Second, enrollment management needs to understand the adult student market outside of the college in order to determine ways it can get a larger share of that existing market. What are these adults' personal characteristics? What, where, and how do they study? What would it take to draw them to the college?

Hand in hand with both sets of data, enrollment management is off to a good start in planning strategies to recruit and retain these adult students. For example, recently OALS worked with one college that attracted adults who enrolled primarily in nondegree programs; that is, typically they took individual courses one at a time. The external adult market in that community, however, was more often engaged in degree study, as shown by a community assessment study. The reason for this mismatch between supply and demand was the fact that the college did not offer the degree majors the adult market was most interested in. In another college OALS worked with, the program for adults was essentially an evening program. A market study revealed that 40 percent of the adult market in that community studied during the day. Unless the college expanded its schedule to reach into the morning hours, it would not be able to capture at least one significant portion of the external adult market.

For many years, college admissions officers have steadily improved their capabilities to understand the high school market, the competition for that market, and ways to serve that market once it enrolled in their institutions. Now it is time to devote some of the institutions' resources to an improved understanding of the adult student market.

Mainstreaming of Adults on Campuses

OALS has spent the past several years examining the mainstreaming of adult students on many campuses throughout the nation. Hundreds of colleges have been visited, college staffs have been interviewed, college practices have been observed, and institutional and state data enrollment figures have been studied. All in all, the data at hand point to an integration of adult students into the regular programs of some colleges, as well as to a major shift in what is "regular" at other colleges, producing new procedures to accommodate both younger and older students.

Several examples illustrate this pattern. Some colleges, such as Mills College in Oakland, California, and Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho, do not have to change their procedures to attract adult students. Adults enter, study, and exit these colleges the very same way as the traditional-age population does. The same entrance requirements (with one exception in that Mills College recently dropped the SAT requirement for adults), the same schedules, the same curriculum, the same faculty, and the same grading standards are maintained. In the truest sense, adults on these two campuses and many others like them are fully mainstreamed and both parties are satisfied.

On other campuses, the colleges have adapted their procedures so that both younger and older students are accommodated. In one sense, we can say that these colleges have sidestreamed themselves enough so that their admissions process, their schedules, their curriculum, and their services seem right for all students. In these institutions, all applicants come through one door; classes are scheduled morning, noon, and night; younger students sit in the same classes with older students; and both groups get the same faculty. (One exception is *off-campus* credit programs, which may be handled by continuing education divisions in these same institutions.) The nation's 1,200 community colleges act essentially in this way, but so do increasing numbers of four-year institutions, such as the University of Central Florida and Georgia State University. On these campuses, the universities have decentralized the authority over their adult programs and have given the responsibility for serving adults to the regular colleges, departments, and deans.

Although the OALS mainstreaming study has surfaced other patterns, the significance of the examples cited above for enrollment management is that, nicely enough, some adult students can be treated much like traditional-age college students without many operational changes. This can be useful information for enrollment management units. But more important is the fact that younger students in this country are studying more and more like older students are. Increasingly, younger students are studying part time, searching for career relevancy in their curriculum, commuting to school, and holding jobs as they study. As the learning behaviors of younger students merge with those of older students, colleges can serve them both in new, but identical ways. For enrollment management units, the important task is to understand fully exactly what the learning behaviors are among currently enrolled students as well as among potential pools of adult students in the community so that effective accommodations can be made for both groups.

The time is right to bring the adult student into your enrollment management plans. Adult students exist in large numbers, they can be easily assimilated into the regular operations of the college, and traditional-age students are acting more and more like adults do each year. Enrollment management plans without adult students as a target are missing an important objective. Consider the alternative.

About the Author

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AVOID DETROIT'S MISTAKES: REPOSITION YOUR INSTITUTION TO RESPOND TO ADULTS

Laurence N. Smith
Rita Abent

When Martha started college last fall, she was a lot like many of her classmates—scared, anxious, and excited to finally start college. But Martha also was different from the "kids" her freshman orientation program was designed to help—she was 40, married, and changing careers in midstream.

"I was really excited about going to school. I'd always dreamed about it. When the admissions recruiter talked to our women's group about opportunities for adults, I thought, okay, this is it. I guess I knew I'd be somewhat out-of-place because of my age, and I expected other students to be a bit leary of me. But I never expected the faculty or staff to be like they were. I'm not a kid and didn't expect to be treated like one. Or patronized. I have another life, family responsibilities, and that's equally important. I couldn't believe the system's insensitivity to my situation. But I was shown in hundreds of ways that unless I fit into the mold of what a 'student' was, I would get lost in the shuffle. I've often wanted to go see that admissions recruiter . . . the one who talked about a flexible, caring environment. I'd like to ask her what college she was talking about. It certainly wasn't here. But then again, I probably couldn't see her anyway. That office closes at 5 p.m. too."

Although Martha's experiences may not be universal, they do represent concerns we've heard voiced by thousands of adult learners on college campuses across the nation. These nontraditional students, lured by promises of environments responsive to the special needs of special students, have instead been confronted by the stark reality of systems that allocate their resources and set up their programs, activities, and services for traditional students. At best, these adult learners feel they have been treated as second-class citizens. At worst, they feel totally ignored. They are frustrated, angry consumers who colleges and universities can ill afford to dismiss.

The Adult Market: Poor Track Record for Institutions

There is little debate in the educational community that traditional enrollments are declining and will continue to decline during the next several years. Indeed, the National Center for Educational Statistics reports that by "1990, there will be 1.5 million fewer youths between the ages of 16 and 24 than in 1984. During this same period, one-third of the nation's population will be in the 25-to-45 age group—the years considered to be the primary adult learning years." Given these statistics, it's quite clear that, in order to maintain enrollments in the next several years, colleges and universities must reposition themselves to respond to adult learners.

Unfortunately, colleges and universities have a poor track record in responding to market needs. Like the Detroit auto moguls who insisted on churning out gas-guzzler after gas-guzzler when the market clamored for small, quality automobiles, we've been too insistent about offering what *we* want to, when *we* want to. And, like American consumers who turned to foreign imports to get what they wanted, adult learners have increasingly turned to alternative programs. Upwards of 50 million adult learners are estimated to be involved in educational programs outside the formal postsecondary system.

Fortunately, higher education can learn from the auto industry's mistakes. Detroit believed it was invincible, that its markets would last forever. The industry ignored consumers who clamored for new products to meet their changing needs. And when the crunch came, it found itself without products or customers. Education is facing the crunch—a traditional student enrollment decline. And to avoid the same predicament Detroit faced, we need to heed what's happening in the marketplace.

Just like the smart person who makes friends before he or she needs them, we must seek out and nurture the 50 million adult learners who have left traditional programs *now*, not sometime down the line when we're faced with reducing our programs and in some cases closing our doors. We need to increase our understanding of who these adult learners are and what they want. We need to know why they have chosen alternative roads or, if they are enrolled in our programs, how well we are meeting their needs.

Poor Treatment and Unmet Needs

In our interviews with hundreds of adult learners participating in nonuniversity programs, two reasons why adults avoided traditional institutions continually emerged. The first was that adults perceived they were treated negatively by the institutions specifically in the classroom. The second was their inability to get what they needed. Time and again we were told that the colleges and universities were too rigid in determining what and when adult learners should learn.

Interestingly, adults who were enrolled in traditional programs also voiced many of the same concerns. One student told us:

> *"I couldn't wait to start the term. Once I got there, however, it was awful. I couldn't find parking, the campus map was impossible to decipher, there were no names on buildings, and I couldn't find anyone to help me."*

Another student shared this observation:

> *"I guess you can call me a traditional, nontraditional student. I'm enrolled as a full-time day student in an undergraduate curriculum. There are three of us in the class who have returned to school after raising our families, and we are beginning to bug the teacher as much as he is bugging us. His comments on Monday about how students spend the weekend and his jokes and references really give him away. Since we keep pointing out that his generalizations aren't true for all undergraduate students, he has become very uncomfortable with us. He now has to think before he speaks. I guess it's sort of a radical concept for him."*

In addition to teachers who are often unprepared to deal with adult learners in their classrooms, the institution itself is often unresponsive. A prominent Dean of Continuing Education told us:

> *"Thirty-five percent of our students are adult learners who attend classes after 5 p.m. After the first week of school, not one office is open when they are here for class."*

All of these comments came from people involved in programs that purported to meet adult learners' needs. Did the colleges and universities who recruited these adults ever anticipate that they would encounter such negative situations? Probably not. Is the reality of what they're delivering hurting them? Yes.

We live in a society where reputation is important and where word of mouth is a major source of communication. Those with whom we have institutional contact all talk to one another and share their experiences about us. A satisfied student becomes our best recruiter; a dissatisfied student, our worst detractor. And because peers have a high degree of believability with peers, their per-

ceptions carry the highest degree of influence. Accepting the fact that more and more adults will be involved in postsecondary education, how then can your institution best proceed to reposition itself to meet the needs of this growing market?

Repositioning: First Steps

An initial task for any institution serious about attracting and retaining adult learners is an assessment of your campus climate. Table 1 is a simple, albeit practical, assessment questionnaire. Once you've answered these questions, you should have your administrative colleagues, faculty, and currently enrolled adult learners answer them. Then you should compare your responses. Are you able to find "official" responses documented in university policies, procedures, and publications?

In a traditional marketing approach, the disparities identified by the various participating groups (boards, administrators, faculty, staff, students) would help you

TABLE 1. ADULT LEARNERS: ASSESSING THE CAMPUS CLIMATE

1. What does the adult student really mean to your college or university?
2. Do you treat adult learners differently from your traditional undergraduates?
3. Are there special offices to serve adult learners?
4. Do you know what programs and activities adult learners really want and need?
5. Are your adult learners degree-seekers, problem-solvers, or leisure-learners?
6. How many adult learners are employed full time?
7. How many adult learners are returning homemakers?
8. Is recruitment literature written for adult learners?
9. Can adult learners identify with the images in your publications?
10. Are adult learners eligible for financial aid? Are there financial aid opportunities especially designed to meet their needs?
11. Is day-care provided? Is evening-care provided?
12. Are adult learners invisible, or are they highly involved on campus?
13. What triggered their returning to school?
14. Are your programs, services, and activities geared to meet their needs?
15. Does your student activities office have special programs that cater to adult learners' interests?
16. Do adult learners participate in student government, football games, etc.?
17. Are adult learners on campus committees?
18. Are there special workshops on teaching and learning effectiveness for faculty with adult learners in their classes?
19. Do adult students learn differently than their younger counterparts?
20. Are adult learners more intellectually sophisticated and emotionally mature about their college experience?
21. When an assignment is missed, are adult learners given special consideration, or is special consideration seen by faculty as a double standard?
22. Do most adult learners have full-time or part-time instructors?
23. How do your current adult learners rate the faculty? Is there any disparity between how adult learners rate faculty and how traditional students rate the same faculty?
24. How are student experiences measured on your campus?
25. Are your retention rates the same for adult learners as they are for traditional students?
26. Why do adult learners choose to study at your institution?
27. What characteristics best describe the types of adult learners at your school who persist, who stop-out, who leave and never return?
28. Are there special orientation programs for adult students? Is someone at your institution responsible for representing adult learners' needs throughout the institution?
29. What specific activities have taken place at your institution in the last few years to make it more responsive to adult learners' needs and experiences?
30. At what stage would you assess your institution's readiness for change regarding meeting the needs of adult learners? Is it in a latency, awareness, ready to act, or fully engaged stage?
31. Who would join with you to further enhance opportunities for adult students on your campus?
32. What would be the best ways to bring about the desired changes?

TABLE 2. FIRST STEPS IN INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITIONING

Support Service Area	Current Focus	Repositioning for Adult-Learner Focus
1. Admissions	Literature focuses on traditional undergraduates and activities geared to their needs (e.g., residence halls). Admissions decisions are based on high school GPA and achievement test scores.	Include pictures of adults in existing pieces, or prepare special brochures that feature adults and their needs. Use an open admissions policy.
2. Financial Aid	Most federal, state, and university aid programs are for full-time, dependent, undergraduates.	Identify a percentage of institutional dollars for adult financial aid. Allow adult students with tuition benefits who will not be reimbursed by their employer until they complete their course work to register without the usual deposits or prepayments required. Identify sources of funding from business, industry, and government for adult learners.
3. Career Services	Focus is on preparing students to enter the job market for the first time. Services often are limited to career planning, résumé development, interviewing techniques, and first job placement.	Include career transition seminars. Use local personnel administrators as consultants-in-residence to develop programs for displaced workers. Provide individual and group support activities that address problems of the adult learner entering, reentering, or moving within the job market.
4. Campus Life	Concerts, clubs, dances, and organizations cater to traditional students' tastes and schedules.	Offer weekend programs that encompass broader cultural preferences. Offer child care. Identify events the whole family will enjoy. Build on the concept of "family as student."
5. Academic Advising	Focus is on helping students understand graduation requirements, select a major, and link majors to careers.	Help define why students returned to school and what their expectations are. Develop interdisciplinary curricula that meet needs. Guide students to professors who are attuned to adult learners.
6. Faculty Office Hours	Scheduled at faculty's convenience, most often during the day.	Allow students to schedule additional times other than drop-in hours. Offer evening and weekend hours, or remain after class.
7. Orientation	Most small-group sessions and preterm large gatherings focus on personal, social, and educational development. Programs are residential in nature with much time devoted to "rah-rah" activities.	Understand that lack of participation may be because work or family responsibilities do not permit "days" away. Offer several short, high-content programs. Send program materials to students to study at their convenience.

understand your image (how you are seen) and help you define your position (how you want to be seen). But we believe in order to capture and retain the highly elastic adult market, your positioning statement must reflect not only how you want to be seen but also how and what you really are.

Our repositioning focus is one of mobilizing the university to intentionally enhance the quality of learning life for adult learners. We believe that this can best be done by repositioning student support services and delivery of instruction on a program-by-program basis. Table 2 shows how this concept can be applied in practice.

You'll notice in Table 2 that, at each impact area within the university, the purpose of repositioning our programs—to identify obstacles that are barriers to adult learners' success and to propose solutions—is clearly articulated. This model is in no way all-inclusive. We share it only as a stimulus and framework for how you might approach your own situation. We recognize that change comes about unevenly and in small amounts; therefore, we recommend that you have big plans but translate them into small steps. If various members within your institution aren't ready for change, work with those who are.

In any case, the primary motivation must be to make all levels within the institution aware of and responsive to adult learners' needs. Where adult learners are different from their post-high school counterparts, the system should and must respond.

Systemic Approach Needed

We believe that unless a systemic approach is used, adult student neglect will continue. We also believe that resources and a rich tradition of service already exist on campuses. What must take place is a redirection of priorities and an internal reallocation of resources to meet the need. Campuses must stop talking about adult learners as units to be processed (like the Detroit model), and they must think about and treat adult students as the valuable friends they are.

To reposition your campus to serve adult learners, you need to recognize what the educational researchers have told us, that adult learners:

- Are apprehensive about going back to school.
- Need to feel in control of their learning situation.
- Are pragmatic.
- Learn differently.
- Benefit from self-paced learning situations.
- Need faculty to be aware of their special needs.
- Learn better in interactive learning situations.

Institutions need to test their campus programs, activities, services, and instructional delivery against those differences.

Adult learners do have different needs. Meeting these needs doesn't mean lowering standards, it means recognizing that adults' behaviors are driven by different factors. When adult learners miss class, it is most often because of work or family responsibilities—not because of traditional undergrad excuses. The instructor who, at the beginning of the term, identifies students who are willing to be called by adults who are forced to miss class is going a long way toward creating a self-help network for adult students. This is the kind of network that traditional undergraduates have built into their social and residential living patterns.

As administrators, we can influence instruction in two ways. First, we can select faculty who possess the interpersonal skills and teaching styles that are most applicable to adult learners' needs. Second, we can provide opportunities for faculty who are not in this mode to gain insights and skills that will help them become more effective, productive teachers of adult learners.

We need to move our institutions forward from a "teaching-centered" environment to a "learning-centered" environment. The United States is becoming a service economy. Universities should already be in that service mode. We should use the adult learner on our campus as one of the best measures of how well we are doing as a service organization.

We must have measures of effectiveness, and we must collect and share information. We must communicate back to the students who generated the data. We must change from an organization with implicit values and norms to an organization with explicit values and norms. That means that *service* must be defined in terms of policies and procedures, faculty and staff training and development, as well as financial resources.

Economically, it is in an institution's best interest to pursue a service orientation, not only for adult markets but for all other markets as well. It's a given that it is less costly to keep a current student than to recruit a new one. Plus, as we become even more of a learning society, alumni will be one of the richest sources of returning students.

Establishing a well-conceived strategy for quality service requires a total institutional commitment. The question, then, is how to encourage your campus to respond.

Mobilizing Your Campus to Respond

Changing an institution is a complex phenomenon. However, many institutions are changing. In light of the

TABLE 3. 10 STEPS TO PLANNED CHANGE

1. The institution's president and key executives must sanction the repositioning effort, define appropriate management goals, and assign accountability.
2. Planning should be done proactively and be future oriented. You must envision where you want to be rather than where you are, thus eliminating defensive postures.
3. Planning must be collaborative, both top down and bottom up, and involve all who can contribute to the effort plus those who have responsibility for implementing the changes recommended.
4. Temporary teams should be used to guide the effort. These teams should be composed of those who have functional responsibilities and skills to ensure the project's success, rather than those appointed for political reasons.
5. The human and support resources necessary for success must be made available.
6. The process must respect the uniqueness of the campus culture and start with those who are willing to be involved. You must keep the door open for those who later become ready to help.
7. A goal-driven plan must be developed. This should include step-by-step objectives and implementation schedules that are stated in end-result, measurable terms and are time-bounded.
8. Involvement must be recognized and rewarded at both the unit and staff levels.
9. The change process must be open, documented, and evaluated so that all members of the campus community have access to information about all successful and unsuccessful events, practices, and activities.
10. Appropriate "celebrations" should be scheduled when successes are achieved along the way.

myriad external and internal forces causing change, you need to focus on the concept of *planned change*.

Successful planned change requires the various parts of the university to work together to achieve a common goal. You must develop a collaborative approach. This is especially difficult since most colleges and universities profess collaborative intentions but are structured into colleges, divisions, and departments that constantly compete for limited resources. Add to this structural problem anxiety about the future and general suspicion itself, and you could face an unworkable situation. Fortunately, there are very compelling forces that are creating both the awareness and readiness necessary for bringing about change.

Enrollment forecasts, technology's impact on curriculum, alternative methods for delivering instruction, the strong value orientation about individual importance, the desire to be a quality institution, and traditional governance structures that allow for involvement and sharing represent only a few of the conditions that make introducing recommended changes possible. To ensure favorable movement toward creating quality learning for adult students and for the whole campus as well, an institution should follow certain steps, listed in Table 3.

Vision and Leadership Make a Difference

Colleges and universities are in a unique position to influence their own futures. We can respond as Detroit did several years ago to new consumer demands and suffer irreversible damage, or we can truly get close to our consumers and provide the products and services needed for a new generation. The future of our colleges and universities are tied to what we do today more than at any other time in our history. Our present vision and leadership can make a critical difference in our future. We can respond now and be the beneficiaries of change, or we can respond later and be the victims of it.

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DEVELOP A POWERFUL DATA-BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR YOUR INSTITUTION

John McIlquham

Colleges and universities are in an unusual position within the nonprofit sector to expand their student population base, thereby improving cash flow, income, and net profit. This unique strategy of expanding student acquisition and retention into the adult learner market is premised upon the notion that most educational institutions are not forced to rely on the traditional student or donor bases that saddle other nonprofits.

In order to understand this new way of looking at the prospective adult learner market, educational institutions must first jettison the passive analysis that has characterized previous marketing strategies. Instead, colleges and universities should take hold of current information that we will call "datastore."

Within the datastore are two primary information bases that all colleges maintain, formally or informally. The first primary base is the current adult learner market. The base information can be categorized by two important banners: age and employment status. Each one of these two banners dramatically affects the design, marketing, enrollment, and renewal of the entire adult learning curriculum. Employment status is important because it determines course selection, not the university. Age is equally important because it determines both choice of university and course selection.

Although income, gender, and other demographic characteristics are encouraged as primary base information to be maintained in the datastore, the essential in-

formation should be name and address, age, and employment status.

The second primary base is previous education, since adult learning courses may or may not require previous college credit for enrollment. Knowledge about education level is important because it determines which course eligibility requirements should be marketed to the appropriate level of the student prospect.

Our datastore, which can be maintained in its most simple form on 3-by-5-inch cards or on personal computers for the more sophisticated institutions, is beginning to build a powerful foundation for more complex acquisition and retention strategies. However, it is essential that the institution assign one department with primary responsibility for maintaining and updating the datastore. This department should look at admissions, development, and postgraduate (continuing) education as equal information providers for the datastore.

Information Providers

In our new system, each department becomes an information provider of both currently enrolled adult learners and prospects. Imagine our datastore concept as a huge circle divided into two equal information bases (A and B), with base A containing name, address, and age and base B containing employment status and education level. Then picture two concentric circles orbiting our datastore. The first concentric circle is labeled *currently enrolled adult learners*. This circle is really an information provider for the datastore. It provides ongoing, almost interactive information to the datastore by compiling necessary demographic and attitudinal profiles for later replication in marketing and retention efforts.

For instance, your particular college may have an adult learner student body made up of these age groups:

- 35-49 year olds (40 percent)
- 50 year olds and older (40 percent)
- mixed ages of less than 35 and older than 65 (20 percent)

Half are full-time employed and one-quarter are self-employed. The remaining quarter of the students are nonemployed or part-timers. A total of 30 percent have college educations, and 70 percent are at least high school graduates.

What will this profile tell you about finding similar students for enrollment? It sets up grids of information that can be cross-tabulated for later analysis.

The second concentric circle around our datastore is labeled *adult learner prospects*. This circle of information about potential students can be gleaned from local census data, or, at a fairly low price, from geo-demographic maps that indicate education and age levels in the surrounding community. The unusual nature of this datastore is that, while interactive, it also presents a revolutionary opportunity to design programs to meet students' needs rather than using the traditional college marketing philosophy of establishing programs and then finding students to put into the classrooms. Our datastore concept, with its demographic overlays, allows colleges to decide which programs are the most appropriate to fit both concentric circles of information demands.

Information Demands

Information demands are gathered from our concentric circle of currently enrolled adults by doing attitude surveys that are inexpensive, simple, and correlated to age and education levels. Adult learners can be surveyed for their interest in facilities, programs, orientation, access to study areas, libraries, social activities, fees, or other necessary institutional offerings.

Again, the reason that age becomes an essential ingredient in our primary information base of the datastore is that attitude can be a function of age. Simply put, the older adult learner, who has commonly shared perceptions with similarly aged adult learners, will reflect that similarity in attitude surveys.

For instance, a college might find that parking is a worry for many older adult learners. They possibly could do a census of parking lot capacity and find that the hours of 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. are the least congested during the school day. Therefore, the attitude reflected among older students about parking concerns and the census may indicate an opportunity to offer adult learner programs from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. for this particular group. Although some college administrators may fear that these "early bird" courses may cannibalize their evening-hour courses, the enrollment and resulting fees may offset concern about lowered numerical counts. More senior adults with concern about parking and security may find the early afternoon hours more attractive and, therefore, a greater inducement to enroll.

The same type of match between attitude and age or education level could produce similar opportunities to create new programs or new schedules or new courses. The point of our datastore is that its interactive nature, fed by survey and demographics, will point the institution to where the market is, rather than trying to establish a market with preset hours, programs, and mailings.

It is also important to gather information demands from our concentric circle of potential students. A college can gather this information through a simple telephone or mail questionnaire to a statistically representative sample of employed, part-time employed, and unemployed high school and college graduates.

Employment is an important component of our datastore because of the demographic significance of value perception about adult learning courses. For example, among full-time working women (those working 30 hours or more), part-time working women (those working less than 30 hours), and unemployed women, the

best market for adult learning programs is the part-time employed. This demographic group actually has greater financial and education levels than the other two subgroups in the employment category. Colleges and universities typically market to full-time employed women based on the mistaken notion that they have greater money and desire to enroll. However, part-time working women represent a more prudent marketing investment.

Every group, every mailing, and every poster must have direct-response value to the institution. That is, every group should generate its own statistics for the datastore, and every mailing to prospects should contain some direct-response feature (coupon or telephone or response) to be captured in the datastore. Those advertising and promotional media that do not contain address, phone number, and response device become misused dollars in already tight budgets.

When direct-response advertising is employed and every student is surveyed, the interactive nature of our datastore concept becomes apparent. Each transaction, if properly marked, becomes more information for the datastore. And as the datastore grows, so does its value. It will permit intelligent, cost-efficient choice of direct-response advertising, markets, and even course design.

Linkage to Other Departments

Once the datastore is established and ongoing, then the linkage with other departments becomes fruitful. For instance, admissions may feed into the datastore names and addresses of prospective students who inquired about full-time or part-time courses but chose to go elsewhere. If the student is located within seven miles of the institution, his or her name should be entered into the datastore for further marketing. In addition, names of students who graduated or took courses should become part of the ongoing datastore prospect base. Every mailing to these individual groups, as seen by their interactive nature with the datastore, produces new information, including the desire *not* to go to the school or take a course.

This idea of "negative" datastore can actually become quite valuable since almost as much information can be gathered by finding out why people decide not to enroll as can be found from those who did enroll. Negative datastore tells the institution how its programs compare in terms of course interests, schedule preferences, fears, and needs. Combined with the negative datastore, the complete datastore offers a vivid look at the current and prospective student population. It provides an ongoing, interactive system of constantly moving and adjusting to new opportunities when they are presented by the concentric circles of information.

As we noted earlier, this datastore concept can be maintained on index cards as well as on computers, given sufficient volume to justify the cost. Once established and horizontally linked with other departments, the datastore can provide a powerful way of taking advantage of the institution's most valuable resource—itself.

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UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT BOSTON CREATES NEW ENROLLMENT SERVICES

Douglas Hartnagel

College is not just for college kids anymore. Colleges and universities are working hard these days to develop programs for their new student, the adult learner. This is not a new phenomenon. Institutions have been offering part-time programs through continuing education and evening programs for years. The difference today is that college and university central administrations are paying attention to the issues surrounding adult learners. It is no longer left to the area of continuing education to address these needs.

Demographic studies show that the population is getting older, and the cohort of 18–21 year olds is shrinking.* Many colleges and universities have come to realize that if they are to maintain their enrollments they must seriously consider attracting more and more adult learners. The following statistics bear this realization out. More than 4.7 million persons aged 25 or older were attending college in 1985. Adults aged 25 or older now account for more than 38 percent of all college students. Nearly 1.7 million of today's college students are 35 years old or older. This 35-or-older group is one of the fastest-growing components of college enrollments, having nearly doubled since 1973, which is an increase of 875,000 persons.**

* Elizabeth F. Fideler, "A Second Chance: Meeting the Needs of Adult Learners," *New England Journal of Public Policy*, 1987, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 89–109.

** *Higher Education and National Affairs*, May 4, 1987, p. 3.

The major difference between adult learners and traditional-age students is that adult learners tend to be more consumer oriented. They are not afraid to challenge faculty about the content or relevance of a particular subject. They are not afraid to question the institution about the "product" they are receiving. They are not as tolerant towards the bureaucracy of higher education as their traditional-age counterparts. Many of them are sacrificing a great deal to attend college and, therefore, will not persist at a particular institution if it cannot satisfy the adult learner's needs in a reasonable manner.

How colleges should service the adult learner is an ongoing debate on campuses throughout the country. The University of Massachusetts at Boston attempted to address this issue by focusing on three general administrative support areas: admissions, registration and records, and financial aid.

New and Successful Changes

The University of Massachusetts at Boston is an urban, public university that has been attracting adult learners for its entire 23-year history. The university has 13,000 students, of which 55 percent are 25 years of age or older. U Mass is a commuter institution with most students living within a 30-mile radius of the campus. Women make up 51 percent of the student body, and the typical student has to juggle work schedules and family life to attend classes.

This description of the university is not unusual for an urban institution. Most urban institutions are considered viable options for adult learners. The university's success in attracting adult learners is attributed to cost, accessibility (public transportation runs directly to the campus), flexible scheduling of courses, and a reputation that the faculty actually enjoys teaching adult learners. In 1980, the university began to recognize that the market for adult learners was growing more competitive. The projected declining high-school-age population meant that institutions would have to look at new markets to fill the seats left vacant by the lack of traditional freshmen. Although the university probably had a leg up on most of the other institutions of higher education in the greater Boston area, it believed it could not continue to maintain its market share without some changes in its current structure.

Creation of New Offices

In December 1980, the university decided that a new organization should be formed to provide better-quality service to its students. This new organization would have a direct effect on the university's ability to maintain its market share.

To create the new organization, the university merged the offices of Admissions, Registrar, and Financial Aid into a single service organization. The Dean of Admissions was charged with merging those offices and after six months, in June 1981, the Office of Enrollment Services (OES) was officially formed. Headed by a Dean of Enrollment Services, four departments were created: Admissions, Registration and Records, Student Financial Management, and Systems and Development. Systems and Development was created to coordinate the various computer systems the other three departments needed in order to operate. Systems and Development also was charged with enhancing current systems and developing new ones.

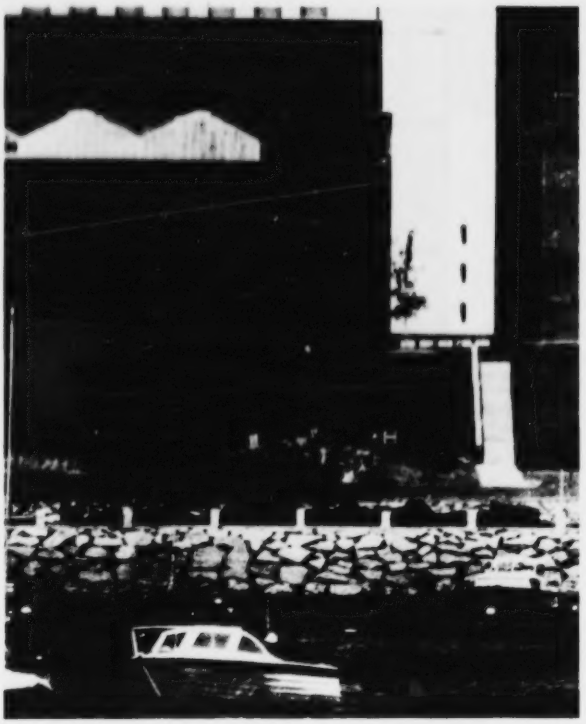
After the takeover of Boston State College in 1982, and the university's decision to increase its graduate programs, a fifth department was created to service graduate students specifically. It was called Graduate Admissions and Records.

The creation of OES had some immediate impact on adult learners at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. For example, office hours were extended into the evening (adult learners who attend evening classes also need to conduct their administrative business in the evening).

A sixth department, New Student Information, was added in the fall of 1983. This department has probably the greatest impact on the servicing of prospective adult learners. It was determined by OES that 50 percent of all inquiries came via the telephone. Before creation of New Student Information, the receptionist in Admissions handled all telephone inquiries in addition to her other duties of servicing students who entered the office. The receptionist barely had time to respond to callers' questions. It was enough just to get a caller's name and address (and in many cases that was not done correctly).

Having the receptionist handle inquiries might have been sufficient if callers only requested that admissions materials be sent to them. However, adult learners' questions tend to be more complex, and many times they are not even sure how to ask the question to get the information they need. It became quite clear that, if OES was to be responsive to adult learners, a new method of responding to their inquiries was needed. Thus, the creation of New Student Information.

Four part-time positions called "information specialists" were created. These four people would respond to all telephone inquiries with the simple task of staying on the telephone as long as it took to answer the caller's questions in a warm, friendly, and accurate manner. These information specialists could not be the stereotypic telephone operators; they had to have the ability to transmit to the caller a genuine feeling of interest in the caller's questions. Hiring the right people to be information specialists was critical, along with a well-structured training program. Since the information specialist needed to be as fresh and interested at 4:00 p.m. as at 9:00 a.m., it was decided that only part-time people would work best.



Information Specialists are told *never* to guess at an answer. If they do not know the answer, they are to take the caller's name and number and call the person back after doing the appropriate research.

In addition to servicing telephone inquiries, New Student Information responds to all written inquiries. It is also responsible for packaging and mailing all materials to inquirers within 48 hours of receiving the request.

Communication with currently enrolled commuter students can be problematic. Adult learners tend not to spend a great deal of time on campus once their classes are finished for the day. OES had to find a way to inform these students about changes in policies or procedures, or simply to remind them of important activities (registration, deadline dates, etc.). New Student Information developed a special newsletter called the *OES Update*. Produced several times each semester, the *Update* is sent directly to the homes of all university students.

Additional responsibilities of New Student Information consists of coordinating all major mailings of the other OES departments and conducting daily tours of the campus.

Weekly Information Sharing

One of the biggest advantages of OES is its ability to share information among the people who give direct service to students. When direct-service personnel are working with adult learners, it is critical that they are familiar with issues beyond their own sphere of responsibility. It is commonplace for an adult learner to have a series of issues that need to be addressed. Many times the adult learner is not sophisticated enough to know how to approach the university's bureaucracy in order to resolve these issues; therefore, the initial contact is extremely important. By having well-informed front-line people who can either respond to the adult learner's inquiries or know how to accurately refer the student to the individual who can address the issues, OES has begun to demystify the bureaucracy of getting a college education.

OES has put a lot of energy and time into addressing this issue. It employs several methods to insure that all key people in OES are kept up-to-date about university matters.

Every Tuesday morning, all OES information specialists, receptionists from each OES department, and secretaries to department directors meet to share information and to be briefed by representatives from other university departments, such as Veterans Affairs, Teacher Certification, Women's Studies, and Office of Returning Students, about what is happening in their departments. A list of the topics to be discussed each week is distributed at the beginning of each semester to all members of OES; this enables nonregular attendees of these meetings to attend sessions of particular relevance to the service they provide in OES.

The first Friday of each month is reserved for a general meeting of everyone in OES. A two-hour meeting is held

in the morning, at which current issues involving the various OES departments are discussed. Information sharing also goes on during the remaining Fridays in the month. The OES departments do not open for business on Fridays until 10:00 a.m. Each OES director uses the early morning hours to conduct some form of information sharing or training.

Finally, a weekly calendar is produced by the Dean's Office in OES. This calendar is an attempt to put in the hands of every OES member exactly what is planned for the week both in OES and, when appropriate, elsewhere on campus.

Our experience with these methods has shown that the more staff know, the more confident they feel and the more willing they are to provide high-quality, friendly service.

Unique Staff Development

At first one might ask, "What does staff development have to do with adult learners?" At the University of Massachusetts at Boston, it has a great deal to do with servicing adult learners. OES has an ongoing staff development program with a two-pronged approach. First, staff attend a program of workshops and seminars to help them improve writing, service management, telephone, and people skills. These workshops are held during normal working hours and supervisors encourage their staff to attend. Second staff participate in cross-training programs. In 1981, OES developed a Professional Staff Exchange Program. This program allows professional staff from one OES department to exchange jobs with a staff member from another department for an entire year. The exchanges involve two as well as three people at one time. The staff members benefit from these exchanges because they grow professionally and become proficient in a new area. The students also benefit because they can be serviced by someone who can address more than one issue without having to send them to another office. OES now has a cadre of people—cross-trained generalists—who can be called upon to assist other departments during peak periods or when unexpected vacancies occur.

A similar program for support staff is also available. Rather than an exchange program, a selected support staff person is rotated through all OES departments during a two-and-one-half-year period. They become thoroughly knowledgeable about the various operations within OES, and their reward for participating in this program is promotion to a professional position after successfully completing the program.

Back-to-College Seminars

The extensive experience the university has had in dealing with adult learners has provided OES with a wealth of knowledge about their needs. One of the needs of adult learners is preadmissions counseling. Many adult learners anxious to return to school just do not know how to take that first step. Often, they do not have access to the type of educational counseling available to high school students. Adult learners need factual information about admissions policies, financial aid, academic programs, and support services, as well as support and encouragement.

These are some of the common concerns adult students express:

- I am afraid I'm too old to learn.
- I had a terrible high school record and don't feel prepared.
- Can I do the work?
- I went to college 10 years ago. Are my credits any good?
- How can I fit it into my life, with a job and family?
- I want to go to school, but I don't know where to begin.

Walking into an Admissions Office to get the answers to these questions is likely to be a very traumatic experience for an adult learner. In an effort to address this situation, OES developed a series of public service seminars, called the Back-to-College seminars.*

The Back-to-College seminars are less threatening to adult learners and allow them to make an intermediate, anonymous step toward school. In these seminars, the emphasis is on information—not recruitment. Attendees are given information about all their options so they can make informed decisions. These seminars are given both on and off campus. The off-campus location could be a town library, a public or community service agency, or a business or industry site.

Although it would be natural for an admissions counselor to conduct these sessions, the staffing level within the Admissions Office does not permit the staff to be the sole providers of the seminars. Their other responsibilities of outreach activities and application processing limit their availability. Instead, OES uses its cross-trained generalists. By using people who had gone through the OES staff development program, OES is able to successfully cover all seminars. For example, a financial aid officer can easily conduct a seminar, because he or she has extensive experience in Admissions and in Registration and Records. The same is true for staff in the Registrar's Office. In addition, these generalists sometimes are better suited to conduct the seminars than is an admissions counselor, who may not be familiar with issues about financial aid or academic policies.

A second activity in which OES addressed the needs of adult learners is Personalized Admissions Service (PAS). PAS is aimed specifically at applicants who decide

* Douglas Hartnagel and Jeanne Union, "Admissions and the Nontraditional Student," *The Journal of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors*, Vol. 25, No. 4, April 1981, pp. 9–13.

How to go to college if you're not a kid.

As a group, people past college age are the best college students. But that doesn't mean things are always easy for them.

That's why the University of Massachusetts offers Back-to-College Seminars, designed to help people past college age plan a college career with a minimum of inconvenience, expense, and anxiety.

These seminars are not a sales pitch for UMass, but informal discussion that will allow you to choose intelligently from all the possibilities that are open to you.

We'll provide information about all the colleges in the area that you're interested in – including tuition, curricula, and admissions requirements.

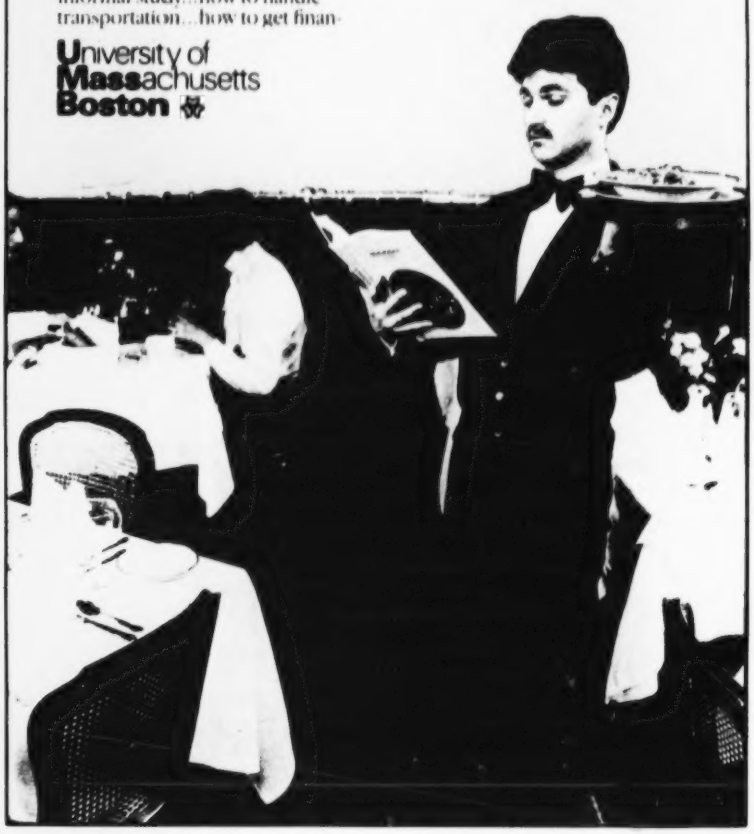
You'll also learn how to fit a college schedule into a working career or child-rearing situation...how to transfer credits from another college...how to receive credit for informal study...how to handle transportation...how to get financial aid...how to brush up on study skills...what to expect when you go back to college at your age.

The seminars, conducted by highly experienced counsellors, run about an hour. They're offered weekly at the Harbor Campus admissions office and a variety of locations in the Greater Boston area.

The next seminar will be held at:

For further information call:

University of Massachusetts Boston



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to apply to the university late in the cycle. For whatever reason, they decide in May, June, or July that they now wish to go back to college in the fall. Most of these late applicants are adult learners.

The University of Massachusetts at Boston determined that the normal application processing procedures were ineffective for these students. It simply took too long to process their applications, evaluate them, and communicate back to the students in time for new student orientation and registration. Because the university also recognized that as a public, urban institution, it serves a population of students whose patterns of applying for admission is unlikely to change, it developed the new method of servicing late applicants.

PAS allows a student to make an appointment with an admissions officer and, at that meeting, bring a completed application with the appropriate credentials. The admissions officer interviews the student, evaluates the application, and makes one of three possible decisions: admit, deny, or refer to committee.

If the student is found admissible, then he or she receives an acceptance letter and instructions on orientation and registration. If the student is not admissible, the admissions officer counsels the student on other educational options and encourages him or her to reapply after successfully completing these other options. This approach is better than receiving a cold rejection letter in the mail. The application packet and application fee is returned to the student to insure that the admissions officer does not feel undue pressure to make a decision simply because the student is sitting there. The admissions officer also can refer borderline cases to a committee that meets each Friday.

There are many positive benefits to PAS. Students benefit because they receive immediate feedback on their status: Accepted students get direction on what will happen next, and students who are denied admission receive counseling so they understand the reasons for the denial and what can be done to correct the situation. The Admissions Office benefits because the number of steps in the processing of applications has been reduced without lowering admissions standards. For example, there is no need to chase down missing credentials.

Many excellent adult learners have joined the university through PAS. In fact, the popularity of this process quickly found the Admissions Office unable to handle the interest. Since PAS is conducted during the last three weeks of the admissions processing cycle, a solution needed to be found to supplement the Admissions Office staff. Enter the OES generalists. Each easily works a few hours per week as an admissions officer to relieve the pressure of trying to service too many students.

Readmissions Program

The third and most recent way better service is being provided to adult learners is through the university's new Readmissions Program. The university experiences large numbers of students, many of them adult learners, who "stop out." These students withdraw for a period of time that lasts from one semester to five years. Their reason for leaving generally is nonacademic (personal, financial, family, etc.). Each semester, the university readmits nearly 800 of these students.

Until this past year, the university had not attempted to do anything special for these stopouts. Then, in 1987, OES developed and implemented a "reorientation" program for readmitted students. Reorientation sessions are scheduled three times a week and readmitted students are invited to attend one session. The session focuses on several areas. Students are acquainted with changes in the university's general and academic policies since the student last attended school. Changes in graduation requirements are reviewed, along with registration and billing procedures. Students are reintroduced (or in many cases, introduced for the first time) to the various support services on campus. Also, financial aid is an agenda item. Because a lot of information is covered in the two-hour session, a packet of materials is given to each attendee.

The OES generalists were the best choice for running these sessions because they have the best overall knowledge of policies and procedures of any people in the university. Each generalist was committed to doing one session every third week.

Conclusion

The activities described here could be accomplished by a variety of autonomous offices. However, the close, integrated working relationship that is so important in Enrollment Services results in an environment in which the adult learner is the direct beneficiary. When staff in OES work with their colleagues in other offices on a daily basis, and when staff feel confident that they know what is going on in the university, this translates into warm, friendly service for the adult learner. The offices of Admissions, Registration and Records, and Financial Aid should be viewed by students as offices that can help them get a college education, not offices that block the way.

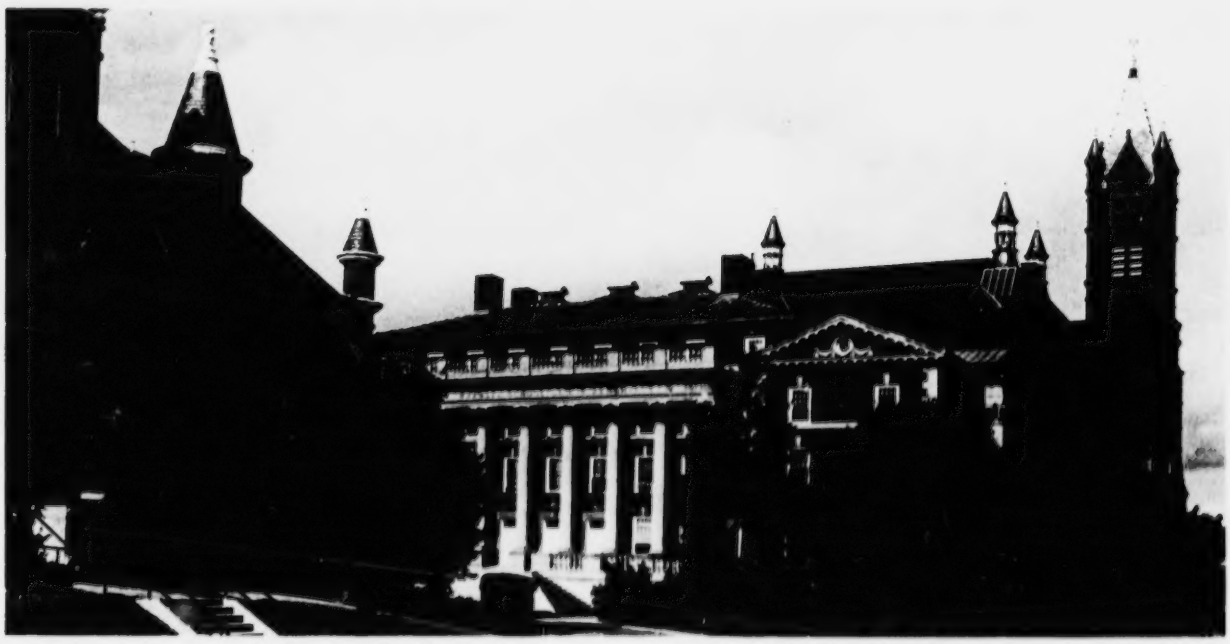
Enrollment Services at the University of Massachusetts at Boston recognizes its unique role in servicing students. It believes its team approach has successfully contributed to the overall success of the university, and this success translates into a positive experience for students.

About the Author

Douglas Hartnagel is Dean of Enrollment Services at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a member of the Advisory Committee on Adult Learning Services of the College Board.

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY FITS ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT INTO ITS ACADEMIC MISSION

Thomas F. Cummings



When a higher education institution uses the words *enrollment management*, the primary significance is that it recognizes the tuition-driven nature of its fiscal stability. Thus the terminology has begun to appear more often in organizational charts of colleges and universities, especially private institutions. "Enrollment management," then, signifies institutional awareness that optimum enrollment is mandatory for the institution's several missions—teaching, research, and service—to go forward. Although this seems like an elementary conclusion, it was not until the late 1970s that complete understanding of the major decline in the high school graduate population led many institutions to recognize their dependence on a stable enrollment stream.

Syracuse University has been aware of its dependency on optimum enrollment since 1971, when indications first appeared that enrollment *might* decline. By 1985, 14 years of successfully combating that possibility suggested that the institution was ready to reorganize administratively in order to move even more aggressively ahead in support of teaching and research. The reorganization was not viewed as a complex undertaking but rather as the natural result of successful institutional management, of some shifting in senior administrators due to retirement, and an awareness that the institution had been fiscally strengthened between 1971 and 1985. Thus, the timing was appropriate for yet another level of effort, primarily to increase the quality of research and teaching at both

the graduate and undergraduate levels. At the same time, increased resources were needed to support a growing enrollment of older part-time students that the "aging" of our population would produce as we approached the year 2000.

Mission Assessment: Difficult Agreement

As the term *enrollment management* gained currency, some observers commented on the need to develop specific organizational "models." The Syracuse experience suggests that for larger, complex institutions *initial focus* must be on mission assessment rather than specifically how to organize to achieve that goal.

Although it would be foolish to minimize the challenge of developing an organizational structure that can achieve enrollment stability, it is initially much more difficult for an institution to agree that having optimum enrollment *must come before* other considerations. To agree requires that the institution be willing, for instance, to establish enrollment targets that displease certain factions, such as some faculty or even student groups. These targets must reflect knowledge of market forces and trends rather than assuming these forces and trends can be shaped by the university. There may have to be compromises, such as apparently uneven resource allocations among institutional units, to ensure that enrollment targets are achieved. It is this recognition by the CEO and the trustees of the institution that is central to the establishment of a rational enrollment policy. The next step is translating institutional will into operational policy. Once it is institutional *policy* to seek and maintain full enrollment, it is possible to establish the required organizational structure.

In sum, the most difficult aspect of developing a successful enrollment management organizational structure is establishing that enrollment is the key to institutional stability and, thus, to academic quality. There is no "best" model for organizing to reach full enrollment—only the insight that analysis of many different institutional experiences may provide. The Syracuse experience is but one of many that have proved successful for a specific set of institutional circumstances.

Recruitment Strategy: First Steps

Syracuse is no different from many other institutions that experienced tremendous growth after World War II. A university of 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students in 1941, it became an environment of 14,000 by 1970. The seemingly never-ending new student application pressure slowed suddenly as hundreds of new schools opened during the 1950s and 1960s and as the end of the baby boom years appeared. Thus, for Syracuse, freshman applications slowed and, between 1971 and 1974, decreased significantly from pre-1970 levels. The chancellor and senior administrators, who had increased faculty numbers, improved physical plant facilities, and put new curriculums in place, were required to focus on how firmly the fiscal health of the university was tied to optimum undergraduate enrollment. Further planning for accelerated academic progress could not be accomplished until steady state, marginally larger, undergraduate enrollment was established. This realization led to the first step in developing an enrollment management plan: the formulation of an undergraduate recruitment strategy that replaced the prevailing selection and admission concept with one that aggressively relayed information and increased applications.

Building on its established reputation and national visibility, Syracuse University designed a comprehensive recruitment strategy to increase the number of students *who were aware enough of the institution to inquire further;* then, once these students were inquirers, make them *familiar enough* with the university to apply for admission. There were several key elements in this strategy, which are outlined below.

Basic Communication Plan

An analysis was made of the most cost-effective methods to present information about the university and put it *directly* in the hands of students and parents. As a result, the number of secondary school visits was reduced, and direct mail became the primary generator of initial inquiries. When Syracuse did this—now more than a dozen years ago—it was one of only a handful of major universities to take this step.

The objective of the direct-mail plan was to induce the entire family to visit admissions and faculty representatives in the field, on campus, or both. To do this, the university decided to use the Student Search Service offered by the College Board.

As was the case for most universities, this meant developing a recruitment publications program that was attractive, informative, and readable. Initial "overview" pieces were designed to get "academic interest" responses from students, followed by a series of mail contacts that provided increasingly specific academic program information, an admissions application, and an invitation to visit with university representatives in the field and on campus. In addition, direct-mail correspondence systems were developed, using contemporary computer applications, that ensured routine, timely responses to detailed program inquiries from prospective students. At a large university, handling more than 100,000 letter or phone inquiries for specific program information is a task for at least one professional staff member as well as clerical staff support.

Besides use of color and excellent photography, the expert support of an *in-house* publications office was es-

sential to the development of a superior direct-mail program. Such a capacity was not in place at Syracuse in 1974. It had to be developed at the same time as marginal enrollment increases were required. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of superior recruitment publications in successful enrollment planning and management. Enrollment management, as an operational concept, *begins* with recruitment publications; the ongoing success of the Syracuse enrollment management effort is due in great part to the accelerated development of superior recruitment publications during the late 1970s.

Dramatic increases in inquiry totals were the result of the direct-mail strategy. In 1974, freshman inquiries totalled 29,000; in 1984, they totaled 99,000. Inquiries are still increasing in 1987. It is apparent for Syracuse that maintaining new student enrollment momentum in a time of student demographic decline depends on the number of potential students *initially interested* in learning more about the institution. For this reason developing ever larger inquiry pools is a primary element of the university's recruiting strategy.

Because Syracuse is a multientry point university that presents a very broad and diversified academic profile, it must be able to inform prospective students about more than 180 program options. During that information process, a prospective student is often made aware of academic programs different from those he or she is originally interested in. Approximately 600 freshmen enroll at Syracuse each year in academic programs that were not among their original choices.

Field Programs

Key to revamping the field recruitment efforts was the establishment of the "evening reception concept"—an invitation to inquirers to visit university representatives at locations convenient to their homes but where the environment was controlled by the university, not by another agency such as a high school. Integral to the evening reception was the presence of faculty for discussion of the undergraduate academic experience and of recent alumni for discussion of that experience from the student's perspective. Of special concern was the relation of the Syracuse learning experience to the career experiences described by the alumni.

Careful development of an expanded cadre of trained, able alumni admissions representatives is an ongoing activity of this recruitment effort. These alumni also represent the admissions office at college nights and fairs, thus expanding the national geographical capability of the full-time admissions staff. Along with the expansion of the direct-mail effort, alumni representative support helped develop secondary markets. In 1974 the mix of in-state and out-of-state freshman enrollment was 60 percent from New York and 40 percent from out-of-state; in 1987 the freshman class is 61 percent from outside New York State, with many students coming from the Sun Belt states and the Far West.

Campus Programs

Campus recruitment programs are more difficult to orchestrate than is commonly imagined. To be truly effective, they require the unstinting cooperation of all major units on the campus, from the academic departments to the security officers in the parking lots. It is the execution of a good campus effort that will test the "enrollment management capabilities" of an institution. Either by good will, clever cooperative mechanisms, executive edict, or all of the above, virtually every segment of the campus must cooperate in order to appropriately receive and effectively inform the prospective students and their parents.

The process begins with management's attitude and understanding, which, at Syracuse, is a tone set by the chancellor, senior line administrators, college deans, faculty, and staff. This tone was not developed overnight. Before the entire campus community became participants in an excellent campus program effort, five years of trial and error went by. Each year great strides were made. Today, the entire campus community is routinely, enthusiastically, and actively participating in campus programs.

From the end of September to Thanksgiving, inquiring students are invited by personal, mailed invitation to attend a Friday program and are welcomed on campus in numbers ranging from 350 to 900. They are parked, bussed in the event of inclement weather, toured, and offered an opportunity to eat in the dining halls with current students. They meet current students, attend faculty discussions of academic programs and majors, and attend a class if that is appropriate. The day is structured to maximize their time, but the organized schedule is over by 2 p.m. so that they may further explore special individual interests. A similar series of days are offered in the spring for admitted students, well in advance of the May 1 candidate reply date. In between fall and spring campus programs, personal interviews, small-group information sessions, and campus tours are conducted six days a week.

More than 20,000 students and parents visit the university each year before making a decision about applying or about enrolling upon offer of admission. Perhaps most important is that Syracuse guarantees each student a personal interview on a day the student can visit the university, except on fall or spring campus program days. Whether it is making special parking arrangements, conducting facilities tours, finding spaces in the dining halls, or scheduling faculty availability, the entire campus wel-

comes the interest of prospective students. The admissions office leads this massive effort, which resembles running for election to public office *every* year.

Of special note are the activities of the "university 100," a group of upperclassmen sponsored by the chancellor and the office of admissions, who compete via application to serve as special representatives of the Syracuse student body. They serve as tour leaders, discussion leaders, escorts for special purposes, and information sharers for any visitors to the campus who wish to hear from current students about any aspect of campus life. Each year, graduating seniors of the university 100 are replaced from more than 350 applicants for this strictly volunteer effort. Many go on to be active alumni admissions representatives, thus completing a cycle begun as a prospective student.

Research and Information Systems: Strong Support

When 3,800 new undergraduate students *must* appear every September, along with 8,100 returning students, 4,400 new and returning graduate students, and 5,000 part-time students, two things are required:

1. Expert marketing survey analysis of prospective students' and parents' attitudes toward the institution.
2. Superior group of information systems support staff to operate the computer systems and to provide data analysis in support of recruitment staff, student affairs officers, and registration personnel.

As Syracuse began to develop the basic elements of a recruitment strategy and to build a recruitment team, it became clear that several supporting strategies and information systems groups would have to complement the effort of admissions and student aid staff. Perhaps most central to the concept of developing a new recruitment strategy was determining how computers and computer technology could best support the enrollment management objectives. Two categories of support activity proved essential. First, a computerized on-line student record system had to be built in order to physically handle the vastly increased number of inquiries and applications needed. Second, without computer systems assistance, there could never be enough data analysis to develop the recruitment strategies for what to do, when to do it, how much it costs, etc. Without the labor-saving capacity of computers the "process intense" nature of dealing with paper records would overwhelm the best enrollment management strategy. In 1975, a new on-line computerized student record system was implemented, which enabled Syracuse to develop flexible mailing label systems. This capability allowed expanded use of the Student Search Service and provided just enough knowledge of the prospective student pool to suggest that we needed to learn much more.

Market Research Surveys

In 1978 we contracted for a market research survey of high school seniors about their attitudes toward the college choice process. The survey proved so rewarding that Syracuse subsequently identified a quality survey research firm to conduct four more increasingly sophisticated market surveys, including a major pricing (tuition) study, two studies of the prospective student pool, and a student aid "yield" study. In addition, Syracuse com-

pleted the first-ever study of the part-time student, commissioned another study of the prospective part-time student, and is about to do a full-scale study of the transfer student market.

As a result of market research done on the part-time student at Syracuse (in the winter semester of 1986–87), changes were made for the fall semester of 1987–88. Because the continuing education division of the university—University College—had been described since 1946 as a division of Syracuse "especially for the part-time student," professional staff were convinced that this identification was *essential* to attracting the part-time student. The survey indicated otherwise. By a wide margin, Syracuse part-time students actually wished to identify closely with the university proper. Acting on this data, University College staff developed a fall 1987 advertising campaign that underscored the Syracuse University "connection" for part-time students, highlighting the fact that 90 percent of the faculty were full-time Syracuse faculty and that part-time students would find a cross-section of full-time students in virtually all classes. The net result: a 4 percent enrollment increase, the first in five years.

This initial study provided many other insights. Among them was the indication that significant facilities improvements are required if full enrollment potential is to be achieved. Further studies are now taking place. One outcome *could* be a decision to build a new facility for part-time students very close to the center of campus, thus moving the downtown University College location, which had been in use since 1946.

It would be hard to overstate the usefulness of quality, professionally conducted market studies. Apart from providing the essential blueprint for recruitment strategy, such studies serve as ongoing monitors not only of prospective student opinion but of the effectiveness of recruitment methods. For many institutions, such students also provide effective "third party" support to convince some "skeptical" university constituencies. Since such surveys are a step back from the intense recruitment operation, they provide an objective perspective on staff "team" effort.

Systemized Reports and Analyses

Along with market surveys, good computer systems, and modern "forms processing" concepts must come thorough and systemized reports and analyses of what is taking place during the recruitment-enrollment cycle. At Syracuse there is a superb Registrar group and an excellent Central Applications Processing group. Graduate and undergraduate inquiries and applications are centralized in one support group, similar to a corporate records center, both of which are key components of the student records computing system. This coordinated effort, under the management of a vice president for computing and information systems, is staff support of the highest order. It permits the total energies of the recruitment staff to be focused on the development and execution of recruitment strategy. Only computer-monitored application folders, complete and ready for review, are presented to the admissions committee members on a daily basis. Thus there is no wasting of recruitment staff time on purely clerical functions.

Reports and statistical analyses in support of the recruitment effort are the mission of the Office of Enrollment Management Research and Information Systems. This office monitors and reports on yields of inquiries, applications, and enrolling students from the recruitment efforts used to produce them. In addition, it also analyzes what works and what doesn't. Daily reports—comparative, day for day, covering several years—of applications, inquiries, and student aid expenditures are vital management tools. This unit also conducts telephone surveys of recruitment activity in the field (instant "samples") to monitor the ongoing quality of our recruitment efforts. Detailed comparative analysis through end-of-year reports is provided to key recruitment strategists, as are simulated student-aid awarding and spending plans in advance of the student-aid cycle. This office reports directly to the vice president for enrollment management and continuing education.

Post Recruitment: Organizing to Maintain Enrollment

Once recruitment strategy and support systems were in place and staffed, Syracuse turned its attention to the more subtle, more difficult challenge of examining the undergraduate experience. This meant scrutinizing every aspect of that experience with a more critical eye than had been the case during the era when there were more college students than spaces for them.

Two key decisions Syracuse made may have relevance for other institutions:

1. Strong, sustained undergraduate enrollment was necessary to maintain academic excellence.
2. Part-time student enrollment is an increasingly important segment of the total enrollment mix as our population ages and the demands for educating this older constituency increase.

As an outcome of these decisions, senior, centralized enrollment management leadership for both full-time and part-time students was positioned in the Office of Academic Affairs, together with the senior administrators who lead the graduate and research operations, the computing and information systems efforts, and the office of undergraduate studies. Thus, in the organizational model established in 1985, the deans of the Syracuse University colleges report to the vice chancellor for academic affairs, as does the vice president for computing

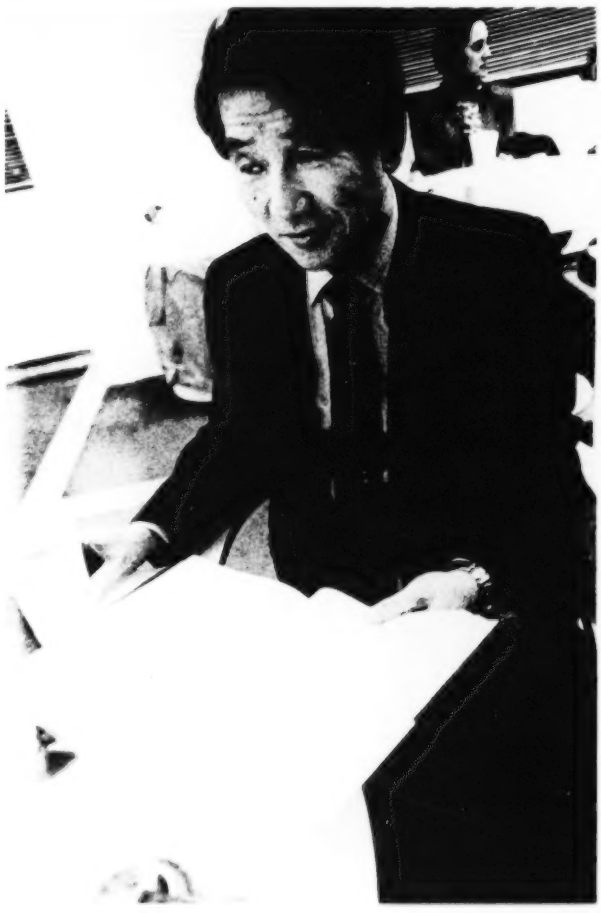
and information systems, the vice president for enrollment management and continuing education, the vice president for research and graduate affairs, and the vice president for undergraduate studies. Together with the university librarian and an associate vice chancellor of academic affairs who manages academic space concerns, faculty personnel, policies, and academic budget preparation, these senior managers comprise an academic affairs cabinet that is organized to deal directly and interactively with all aspects of the academic experience offered to students.

There are several examples of effective enrollment management resulting from this organizational structure.

First, institutional enrollment targets are established within the framework of known academic resources. Although, as mentioned earlier, bottom-line enrollment targets must be achieved, they cannot be reached at the expense of overcrowding certain academic units that may be market trend leaders, or by failing to provide sufficient enrollment for units central to the academic core of the "traditional" university but not presently "popular."

Second, clear understanding of the interrelatedness of enrollment to academic resource management is made an easy communications process. When academic deans and senior administrators have the *same immediate access* to information, they are aware of how the whole institution must relate to the individual academic units of the university.

Third, specific institutional focus is given to either problem-solving or recognition of achievements. For example, when some foreign teaching assistants were perceived by several college faculties to have a problem with spoken English, it was an easy matter to corroborate that the problem was more widespread and that the institution needed to address the problem in a university-wide manner. The result was a two-week teacher assistant orientation program that was spearheaded by the vice president for research and graduate affairs and the vice president for undergraduate studies. All new teaching assistants were required to attend a two-week on-campus program during August. The problem was solved, and 16 assistants were even assigned to more responsibilities than just the classroom.



Enrollment Management and the Part-Time Student

There are three reasons for coordinating recruitment and enrollment management of part-time students with full-time students:

1. Before the year 2000, there will be more part-time students than full-time students—by a wide margin.
2. The educational demands of a technological and service-based economy make the education of part-time, primarily employed adults a national imperative.
3. The institutional rewards for serving part-time students are legion, ranging from additional net revenue generation,

to the improvement of institutional relations, to accomplishment of what has become a most appropriate institutional mission—provision of higher education to a lifelong learning society.

For these reasons, a portion of the resources required to manage full-time enrollment needs to be allocated to part-time student enrollment, an increasingly larger component of the total institutional enrollment stream. The organizational framework for enrollment management at Syracuse establishes such a focus as a central administrative responsibility within the Academic Affairs Office. Senior academic administrators are charged with recruiting both full-time and part-time students and providing academic programs for them. These administrators are organized in a manner that specifically induces them to consider enrollment management policies as an integral part of resource allocation for every academic unit.

Conclusion: A Sensible Experience

The Syracuse enrollment management experience makes sense—for at least one university! What began in the seventies as an institutional response to a perceived threat has become a rational construct for maintaining the lifeblood of a major research university. Faculty and students alike understand the premises for maintaining optimum enrollment. Good things happen for academic excellence when enrollment is optimum (although probably the one area of mild disagreement at all institutions will continue to be just what is "optimum enrollment"). For Syracuse, the integrity of the academic experience has been strengthened during a period when we have increased enrollment and attracted better students: Undergraduate enrollment has increased by 1,800 students since 1974, and SAT scores are up 70 points. This academic experience is most effectively managed at Syracuse as an important part of the university's mission.

About the Author

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COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON'S REORGANIZATION PRODUCES SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

Sue A. Sommer-Kresse

A 1986 survey distributed by Peat Marwick to four-year colleges and universities with enrollments of more than 500 students found that 56 percent of the private institutions and 55 percent of the public institutions had either an office, a committee, or a position with formal authority for enrollment management.[1] Of the 702 institutions responding that did not have a structure in place, more than a third had plans to consider establishing such an office or structure.

Clearly, enrollment management or the functions of enrollment management are an integral part of a growing number of colleges and universities. Recently, the College of Charleston put an organizational model for enrollment management in place, and the plans, activities, and accomplishments of the Enrollment Management Division's initial year have been very successful.

Founded in 1770 and chartered in 1785, the College of Charleston is the thirteenth oldest institution of higher education in America. As a municipal and private school, the enrollment never exceeded 400. In 1970, the College of Charleston became part of the State of South Carolina educational system and, by 1980, the student population grew to more than 5,000. Located in the heart of historic

1. Peat Marwick, *Enrollment Management in Higher Education* (New York: Peat Marwick and Co., 1987), p. 17.

Charleston, this liberal arts institution is very old but also very young.

Why Enrollment Management?

The Peat Marwick study asked respondents what they thought was the single most important aspect of enrollment management for their institutions. Marketing and recruitment, followed by retention, financing, and institutional commitment and cooperation, were cited. All of these aspects were catalysts for the formation of the enrollment function at the College of Charleston.

Marketing and Recruitment

Although enrollments have remained fairly stable for the past five years, any decline in full-time equivalent (FTE) students resulted in reduced financial support from the state.

The decline of FTE from 4,331 in the fall of 1984 to 4,218 in the fall of 1985 created a budget reduction and focused the college's attention on enrollment and recruitment (see Table 1). The college had grown dramatically since it became a state-supported institution in 1970. However, if faculty, programs, and services were to be maintained and improved, enrollments not only had to be maintained, but they had to increase at a reasonable rate.

The projected decline in the traditional-aged college student, and thus the need to look at new student markets including the adult student market, was the impetus for proposing a new enrollment management office in the spring of 1986.

Retention

Enrollment at the College of Charleston can be described as a pyramid with the incoming freshman class as the base. Approximately 30 percent of the incoming students do not continue beyond one year. By the beginning of the junior year, 45 percent of the incoming class have transferred to other institutions, dropped out, or stopped out. Figure 1 reflects fall 1986 enrollment by class.

The demand for beginning-level classes is great, creating the need for more sections and the use of adjunct faculty. However, upper-division classes, those which are most desirable to faculty, are not full and courses for major requirements often must be taught with very small enrollments.

Retention is a concern for all colleges and universities. Underprepared students need assistance to acquire the skills and confidence necessary to compete. We know that the first few weeks on campus are critical for new freshman students and that the first semester sets the tone for many students' academic careers.

The most elusive students in regard to retention are returning adults. Retention figures and patterns of enrollment are almost impossible to obtain. Many returning adults are on the "8- to 10-year academic plan" and their enrollment is affected by financial and family needs.

For all of these reasons, colleges and universities are searching for better ways to retain the students who have been recruited, accepted, and enrolled. A major goal of enrollment management is to analyze the reasons for attrition and to develop and implement a plan to address these reasons.

Financing

Private institutions are more likely to cite this reason as most important for enrollment management. However, because public institutions today are obtaining less support from their states, they are turning to tuition and fees to meet budget needs. The questions of pricing and financial assistance for students become more important as state budgets get tighter. For instance, the State of South Carolina has funded higher education institutions at 88 percent of the amount provided by the 1987-1988 funding formula. Tuition and fees are the only other major source of revenue. Because the College of Charleston also has a small endowment fund to support student financial aid and scholarships, financing education is an important enrollment and retention issue.

Institutional Commitment and Cooperation

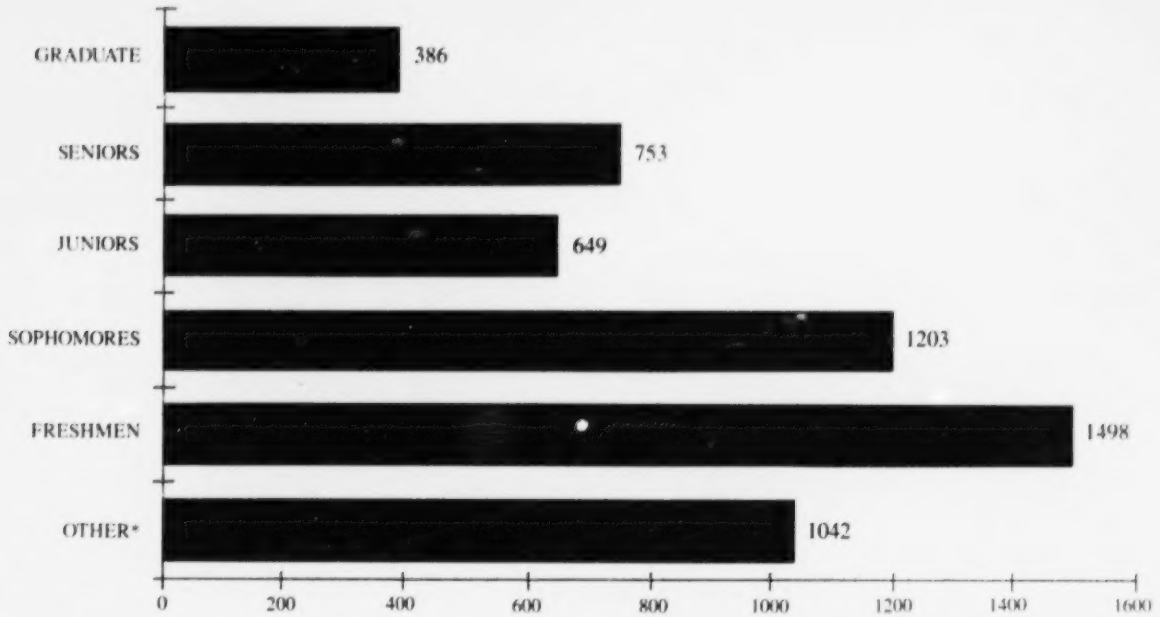
Students are our business. The offices that are now a part of the enrollment management team at the College of Charleston previously reported to three vice presidents. Communication was inadequate among the Admissions Office, the Financial Aid Office, and other student service offices. Without an office or person responsible for the coordination of enrollment, communication was not a priority and each office often functioned without the benefit of information and support from other campus units.

Consultants who were asked to review the admissions and enrollment process at the college cited this lack of

TABLE 1. COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON ENROLLMENT FIGURES, 1982-1986

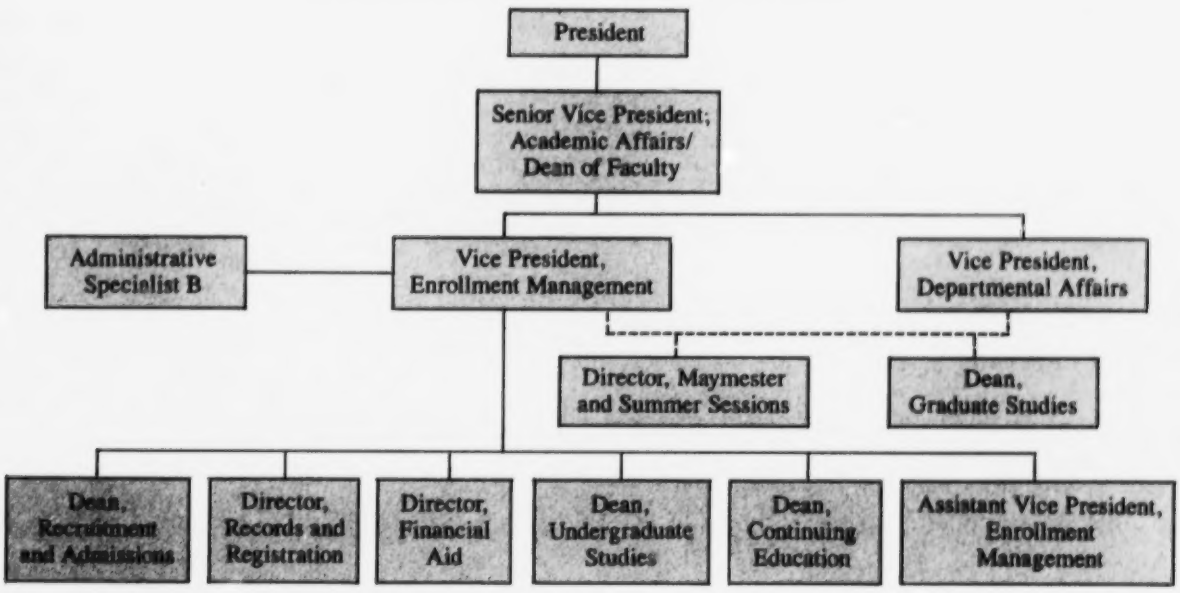
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Student head count	5,394	5,323	5,395	5,303	5,531
Full-time equivalent students	4,466	4,414	4,431	4,218	4,376

FIGURE 1. COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON ENROLLMENT BY CLASS, FALL 1988



*Nondegree and continuing education students

FIGURE 2. COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT DIVISION



coordination as a major problem. A 1985 consultant report recommended the appointment of an enrollment management administrator to coordinate and implement an enrollment strategy. In the spring of 1986, the appointment of a Vice President for Enrollment Management was made in response to the concerns for recruitment and retention of students, financing (as a result of the decline in enrollment), and the need to coordinate, communicate, and implement a recruitment and enrollment strategy (see Figure 2).

Centralization: New Enrollment Management Division

The Enrollment Management Division at the College of Charleston is more broadly defined than at most institutions. Findings from the Peat Marwick study show that the units supporting the Enrollment Management Division are the Admissions Office (100 percent), the Financial Aid Office (87 percent), Academic Support Services (44 percent), the Registrar's Office (72 percent), and the President's Office (68 percent). Given the demographics of current students and the potential student market, the Center for Continuing Education is an important addition to this list. At the College of Charleston, continuing education staff advise and enroll students aged 21 and older who are not degree candidates. Most of these students return for job-related reasons, but others enroll for personal enrichment. Many of these students later decide to become degree candidates.

The Maymester and Summer Session Office and the Graduate Studies Office have dual reporting responsibilities. For the purposes of enrollment planning and marketing, these offices were made a part of the Enrollment Management Division. Because they are academic programs, they also report to the Vice President for Departmental Affairs.

More than 3,000 students attend all or part of the two five-week summer sessions or three-week Maymester. These students include recent high school graduates intending to enroll at other institutions, transient students who want to spend the summer in Charleston, College of Charleston students who want to accelerate their program, and those who enroll to "sample" the education program before making a commitment to attend college. Summer programs provide courses that enhance the institution's ability to attract new students and, therefore, are integrated in the enrollment management plan.

The College of Charleston has a small graduate program offering master's degrees in marine biology, public administration, and education. Ninety percent of the graduate enrollments are education students. Teachers enrolled in recertification courses have doubled the graduate enrollment in the past four years. South Carolina passed the Education Improvement Act (EIA) in 1984 to fund education programs, and courses to improve teaching that have been funded by the EIA have had a major impact on graduate enrollment. These graduate courses are outreach programs to the community involving all the area school districts and almost every academic department on the campus. By raising graduate enrollments, these in-service and outreach programs are a major component of the enrollment picture.

Two other offices, not part of the Enrollment Management Division but providing support, are the Public Relations and Institutional Research Offices. Almost every enrollment management program or strategy requires the assessment of past performance and research information, along with a plan to reach potential students. Without the communication and cooperation of these components of the institution, enrollment management cannot be effective. Staff members from these two offices attend Enrollment Management Division meetings and are involved in the development of a comprehensive marketing plan for the institution.

Three Committees Address Major Issues

Three committees were formed to address the major policy issues and program concerns within the Enrollment Management Division.

Admissions Policy Committee

This committee's charge is to integrate the admission process for all students. This charge may appear too simple or unnecessary. However, the goal is to include the nontraditional students who are enrolled through the Center for Continuing Education, the summer school students who currently do not submit any information to the Admissions Office, and the traditional degree-seeking students. This concept of centralization is not new, but to centralize and maintain the services and support for the nontraditional and summer school students is a major task. Integration of these students into the mainstream of the institution's administration and planning is a monumental accomplishment on most campuses.

Centralization versus decentralization of services is a decision every organization must make. Admissions, advising, and registration for the returning adult student at the College of Charleston have been the responsibility of the Center for Continuing Education. A modified admissions process, more convenient locations, and convenient times are advantages for nontraditional students. Because more nontraditional students need and want the information and experience of orientation on the campus; because all students should be served at convenient times and locations; and because our "traditional" students are working more hours, taking fewer credits, and acting more like our nontraditional students, we are consolidating and centralizing services and programs for all students.

Management Information Committee

Like many colleges and universities, the College of Charleston has an antiquated management information system. Funds for a new system are limited, so an integrated comprehensive system is not likely to be available for many years. This subcommittee is charged with the impossible task of addressing this problem. Cooperation and communication among enrollment management officers is essential when making decisions about software and equipment.

Public Relations Subcommittee

Another example of the centralization of functions is the consolidation of public relations for enrollment management offices. The College of Charleston does not have a comprehensive public relations office. One person has the responsibility to assist all offices and departments with publications. Because the budget for a consolidated effort does not exist, design, layout, and editing of public relations material is done in each office or contracted to outside agencies.

As a first step to address this issue, all funds allocated for publications or advertising in enrollment management budgets were centralized for the 1987-1988 budget year. This will enable the Vice President for Enrollment Management and the Public Relations Subcommittee to monitor and review the publicity efforts of each office. This committee is charged with developing a comprehensive public relations plan for the Enrollment Management Division.

Members of this subcommittee include the offices with major public relations and advertising responsibilities: Admissions, Continuing Education, Summer School, and Undergraduate Studies. The Director of Public Relations is an exofficio member of this committee.

Year One: Strategies and Programs

Building an enrollment management team and establishing goals were priorities. Enrollment Management Division deans and directors met monthly to discuss issues and concerns. To facilitate cooperation and understanding among enrollment management offices, deans and directors were asked to share their three-year plans required in the budgeting process. Although time-consuming, this provided a base of information from which to plan activities and determine priorities. Keep in mind that the offices included in enrollment management had reported to three different vice presidents with little opportunity to share ideas and concerns. The Public Relations, Institutional Research, and Human Relations offices also were included in the initial meetings.

An immediate need was the relocation of the Admissions Office to a central location. This was accomplished during the summer of 1986. Because cooperation between the Admissions Office and the Financial Aid Office is so critical, both of these units were moved to the same building, located in the center of campus. This co-location has proved to be invaluable. Not only has it meant better service for students but also better communication between these two offices.

Short-range and long-range goals were developed at the initial enrollment management retreat. The long-range goals were:

- To increase enrollment at the rate of 3 percent per year for the next three years; to increase the percentage of out-of-state students by selecting target market areas; to increase minority enrollment and overall retention.
- To consolidate all registration functions. Registration was done by the Registrar's Office, Continuing Education Office, Maymester and Summer School Office, and Graduate Studies Office. A three-year goal is to consolidate these efforts.
- To centralize and unify the admissions process. The Center for Continuing Education and Maymester and Summer School Office enroll students for nondegree status. The transition to degree candidacy and the consistent collection of data are the primary concerns of this goal.
- To develop a coordinated public relations effort in conjunction with the Public Relations Office.

Each office developed a detailed plan for the first year within the context of these long-range goals. Major changes and accomplishments within the Admissions Office include:

- Moved office to more accessible location and was housed with the Financial Aid Office.
- Hired new dean of admissions.
- Personalized all correspondence to students.
- Initiated a telemarketing campaign.
- Extended travel schedule in specific target market locations.
- Used Student Search Service to identify new markets.
- Revised literature for prospective students.
- Hosted a two-year college counselor information session at the College of Charleston.
- Extended office hours to every other Saturday to accommodate weekend visitors.
- Initiated volunteer recruiting networks among students, faculty, alumni, and family advisory councils.

The Financial Aid Office also underwent several changes:

- Moved office to more accessible location and was housed with the Admissions Office.
- Hired new director of financial aid.
- Revised scholarship policies.
- Streamlined the awarding process to reduce the documents requested and to make better use of the computer system.
- Instituted a system of management by exception.

The Undergraduate Studies Office made four major changes:

TABLE 2. INCENTIVE GRANT RECIPIENTS, 1981-1987 (n=214)

Sex	Female	175	82%
	Male	39	18%
Race	White	164	77%
	Black	46	23%
	Other	4	1%
Marital Status	Married	113	53%
	Single	101	47%
Age	25-29	86	40%
	30-34	56	26%
	35-39	44	21%
	40-44	17	8%
	45-49	6	3%
	50-54	4	2%
	55-59	1	—

- Revised the orientation process by placing more emphasis on academic programs and services, and by bringing students to the campus for two days in the summer.
- Established an advising center for nondeclared majors staffed by faculty who volunteer to advise in the center as part of their advising load.
- Initiated a three-credit course, Freshman Seminar 101, to prevent attrition of new students.
- Designed and offered a learning strategies course for all probation and academically deficient admitted and provisional students.

The Maymester and Summer School Office initiated a second evening session. A total of five different sessions are now offered: two five-week day sessions, two seven-week evening sessions, and a three-week Maymester term.

Finally, the Center for Continuing Education underwent extensive changes. Approximately 1,400 of the 5,700 students enrolled at the College of Charleston are nontraditional students. This figure includes graduate students, as well as returning adults who may or may not be degree candidates. The nontraditional student is an important component of the enrollment management plan for several reasons:

- The projected decline of the 18- to 22-year-old recent high school graduate will require an expanded student market to retain or increase enrollments.
- The need for license recertification and the upgrading of skills will require adults to return to education.
- Part of the mission of a public liberal arts institution is to serve the community. Meeting career needs and providing a cultural opportunity for the community are major responsibilities of the College of Charleston.
- The State of South Carolina passed legislation that allows any resident 60 years of age or older to enroll in credit courses on a space-available basis at state institutions without tuition charges. In a state that attracts retirees, this legislation may have an increased effect on enrollment.

The decision to centralize enrollment management functions and services affects the Center for Continuing Education most directly. In the past eight years, a concentrated effort has been made to add special services for returning adult students: extended times for advising and registration, off-campus courses, 8-week instead of 16-week courses, etc. With centralization, the challenge is to continue to provide the level of service needed for all students while streamlining the administration. Centralization should mean that all students have services designed for their needs.

Three programs for nontraditional students have been developed that have been extremely successful in reaching the adult community: the Incentive Grant Program; its counterpart specifically for minority adults, the Venture Program; and the College Completion Program.

Incentive Grant Program

Incentive grants provide tuition and fees for the first class that a returning adult student completes. To be eligible for a grant, the adult must be at least 21 years of age, must be returning to education after an absence of at least one year, must possess a high school diploma or its equivalency, and must be a degree-seeking student. Each semester, the Center for Continuing Education announces the availability of grants and requests application material, including a written statement of educational career goals. Each applicant is interviewed and advised as part of the application process.

The demographic profile of incentive grant recipients shown in Table 2 reflects the increased number of women returning to school and their need for financial assistance.

Although the grant pays for the first course, it is the goal of the continuing education staff and the adult student to find alternative sources of funding during the first semester. In individual interviews, students are re-

TABLE 3. VENTURE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT INFORMATION, 1985-1987

	Summer 85	Fall 85	Spring 86	Summer 86	Fall 86	Spring 87
GI	30	17	13	1	8	9
GII		23	16	3	4	3
GIII				1	24	12
GIV						11
Total Enrolled	30	40	29	5	36	35
Cumulative Total	[53]	[69]	[70]	[94]	[105]	

G = Group of students entering program

TABLE 4. COLLEGE COMPLETION PROGRAM ENROLLMENT SUMMARY, 1985-1987

Semester	Number Registered	Number Enrolled as of Spring 1987
Fall 1985	34	12 (35%)
Spring 1986	25	16 (64%)
Fall 1986	33	18 (54%)
Spring 1987	23	23 (100%)
Total	115	69 (60%)

TABLE 5. FALL SEMESTER ENROLLMENT STATISTICS, 1986 AND 1987

		Fall 1986	Fall 1987
Total headcount		5,531	5,767 (+4.3%)
Total full-time equivalent students		4,225	4,671 (+6.7%)
New student headcount:	freshmen	909	1,047 (+15%)
	transfer	621	637 (+2.5%)
	nondegree	188	275 (+4.6%)
New freshmen average SAT scores:	verbal	462	460
	mathematics	486	490
	total score	948	950

quired to develop an academic plan. Career goals, family, job responsibilities, and personal goals are considered as part of this planning process.

It is difficult to track returning adult students for retention purposes. Of the 214 who received incentive grants, 59 were enrolled in the spring semester of 1987. When students who did not attend were contacted, many reported that they had stopped out because of family, job responsibilities, or financing and intended to return. Others had moved with jobs or the military service and might complete work elsewhere.

Although the graduation and retention rate of these students may not be as easily determined or as consistently high as we would like, there are spinoff results of the Incentive Grant Program that are very important:

- Many students have enrolled with a sound academic plan without the further assistance of an incentive grant. Therefore, the program itself is a recruitment tool.
- The program demonstrates the institution's commitment to recruit and serve returning adult students. Interviews with these students have been outstanding testimonials to their capability, motivation, and dedication. The commitment to encourage adults to return to school and to serve them is an important message the College of Charleston sends to the community.
- As a result of publicity about the grant recipients, several unsolicited donations were given to the program. An incentive grant endowment fund has been established and is growing each year.

Venture Program

Because of the tremendous response to the Incentive Grant Program, a similar program designed specifically for minority adults, the Venture Program, was initiated.

The purpose of the Venture Program is to recruit and retain minority adults (25 years of age and older) interested in earning an undergraduate degree at the College of Charleston. Based on the incentive grant model, services of the program include tuition and fees for the first course; interviews, testing, and advising as part of the interview; support group sessions; and coordination by a local minority professional. The inclusion of support group sessions, held on a weekly basis during the semester, was an important addition to this model. These sessions cover such topics as study skills, time management, test anxiety, financing education, and coping on a predominantly white campus.

The response to this program has been overwhelming. A small ad placed in the local newspaper created more than 200 inquiries. After two years in operation, the program has enrolled 105 minority adult students at the College of Charleston. As is the case for all adults, these students stop out or move from Charleston, thus making the retention issue very difficult to address. It is too early to know what enrollment patterns and program completion rates will be like for these students. Thirty-three percent of the 105 students involved in the program were still enrolled two years after the program began. Students who did not enroll were contacted. The primary reasons for stopping out were financial, family, and job responsibilities. Table 3 shows the enrollment patterns of Venture Program students.

The Venture Program has enabled the college to reach out to the black adult community. It provides a structured program to guide adult students through what is often their first experience on a college campus. Word of mouth has brought more students to the program than can be accommodated. Little or no advertising has been necessary to reach potential students. Currently there are approximately 60 persons on the waiting list of this program.

College Completion Program

Another program designed to recruit and serve the returning adult student is the College Completion Program. Because adult students attend part-time, are extremely mobile, and often must stop out for financial, family, and career responsibilities, there are thousands of adult students who have begun degrees but never finished. We know that the best predictor of how a student will do in college is how that student *has done* in college. Adult students who can demonstrate success at other college settings and can bring transfer credits are more likely to succeed and complete a degree.

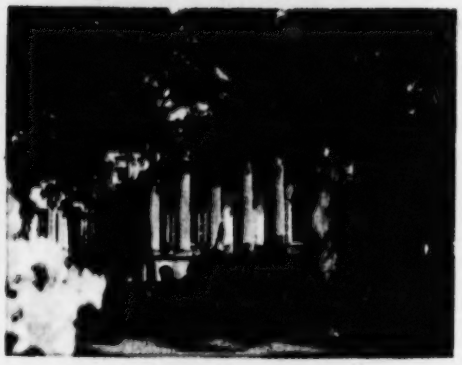
College of Charleston

Incentive Grant Program

A commitment to the adult learner

Questions & Answers About the Program

College of Charleston



In the middle of one of the world's most beautiful cities lies one of the nation's oldest colleges • Here, modern learning labs blend with historic landmarks • Here, people at any time in their lives can meet their educational goals in ways that suit them best • This is a very special college. In a very special city.

At the College of Charleston, education is recognized as both a special need for young people and as a life-long activity. The College serves people with a variety of experiences and backgrounds, from a recent high school graduate with the goal of gaining an undergraduate degree to a senior citizen taking a non-credit course for personal enrichment.

William Struhs

For undergraduates, the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees are offered in more than 20 different majors.

William Struhs

For college graduates, master's degrees are offered in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Special Education, Public Administration, and Marine Biology.

For adults 21 and older, the College's Center for Continuing Education provides programs for anyone who wishes to further his or her education.

Whatever their educational needs, people can satisfy them at the College of Charleston.

The goal of the College Completion Program is to consolidate services for returning adult students who have begun a college degree but never finished. The program streamlines the entry process and provides support services for the entering adult student with transfer credit. It is an attempt to tell the community that returning adult students are welcome and encouraged to complete their degrees.

Existing programs and services are better coordinated, but no new staff or policy changes have been made. There is no additional cost to the institution for this degree completion program except for special publicity. A summary of enrollment patterns for the first four semesters of the program is shown in Table 4.

Year One: Results

Enrollment management success is first of all measured by numbers. How many more students applied, were accepted, and enrolled? Has the quality of the student body changed (usually measured by SAT scores)? Has the retention rate of students improved? Has the mix of students—in-state, out-of-state, commuters, residents, males, females—changed? How cost effective are the specific functions in the recruitment and retention model? Statistics comparing fall 1986 with fall 1987 enrollments are shown in Table 5.

The goal of a 3 percent increase in enrollments, established at the President's retreat in 1986, has been exceeded. A very satisfying and positive result is the larger percentage increase of full-time equivalent (FTE) students. This reflects the even larger increase in new full-time freshmen and transfer students.

The quality of the new students, as measured by SAT scores, has improved slightly. Given the enrollment increase, this is a very important and remarkable accomplishment.

It is too early to assess the effect of the two major retention programs initiated during the past year, although preliminary results are very positive. A new course, Freshman Seminar 101, was added to the curriculum in 1986. A similar course offered at other campuses has reduced the number of students who drop out. The 1986 Freshman Seminar 101 students performed better academically than the students who did not enroll in the seminar program. The retention rate of these students will be monitored.

An experimental study of academically deficient readmitted students enrolled in a three-credit learning strategies course reported that these students were far more successful in achieving required grade-point averages, had fewer D and F grades, and withdrew from classes less often than similar students not enrolled in this class.[2] The continuation rates of these students also will be followed.

Another first-year goal was to establish new markets and increase the number of out-of-state and nonlocal students. The number of new, out-of-state students increased from 301 (17.5 percent) to 379 (19 percent) of the total new entering students. Twenty-four percent of the new freshman students were not South Carolina residents. The percentage of local students (Charleston County) remained the same.

The Enrollment Management Division was able to report positive results after one year. Most importantly, a foundation for better analysis and planning has been established. Cooperation and expanded communication among all the campus constituencies should continue and get even better. Students and their needs are at the center of this expanding effort, and the enrollment management concept and organization has heightened campus awareness of these needs. Consistent concern for the student is one of the greatest accomplishments.

Future Plans

Enrollment management administrators may be viewed initially as too concerned with numbers and statistics. However, if the focus of attention and concern is on the student, enrollment management goals will address the quality of the campus experience, student performance and retention, and, most importantly, student assessment and outcomes.

Higher education administrators have always been concerned about retention. If more students are satisfied and successful, fewer students need to be recruited. Retention factors are complex and include academic success as well as curriculum, advising, housing, parking, etc. The primary focus for the Enrollment Management Division in its second year will be retention issues.

Another major concern of higher education administrators is student outcome assessment. An outcome assessment study group has been established to begin the process of developing a campuswide outcome assessment strategy. Accrediting associations require an assessment model and accountability has become more important for all institutions. If the College of Charleston can better define the experience and outcomes of a four-year degree, it can also more effectively address problems and introduce creative solutions. As a result, recruitment and retention will also be directly affected by addressing outcome assessment.

"The more you know, the more you need to know" is certainly true for enrollment management. The greatest

2. D.V. Taylor, S.M. Powers, W.A. Lindstrom, and T.S. Gibson, "Academically Deficient Readmitted Students: Are They Really a High Risk?" *NACADA Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1987, pp. 41-47.

need is for better data, more research, and most of all a more sophisticated and integrated management information system. The Enrollment Management Division will continue to determine better ways to collect information and analyze results within the capability of time and equipment. Research and planning will always be one of its primary goals.

Year two begins with great satisfaction and excitement. The hard work has paid off. But we know that the challenges are far greater than the accomplishments. We all will be expected to recruit more and better qualified students, to retain more students, and to be most concerned about student outcomes. That is what enrollment management is all about, and it is much more likely to happen with an organization designed to focus on the entire enrollment-to-graduation process.

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SURPRISING SURVEY RESULTS ABOUT RECRUITING REENTRY WOMEN STUDENTS

Linda Felicetti

Because projections for the next 20 years predict enrollment declines, the future of American higher education is uncertain. Baccalaureate colleges and universities find themselves in a declining industry for the first time in recent history. There seems to be little doubt that many colleges and universities are facing an increasingly grim market situation.

Kotler identifies five causes of this crisis:

1. The annual number of high school graduates will decline 20 to 30 percent between 1980 and 1990.
2. The proportion of high school students electing to go to college might decline.
3. A higher proportion of college-bound students are electing to attend community colleges instead of four-year colleges.
4. The absolute and future level of tuition will deter college-going in general and hurt private colleges in particular.
5. College operating costs are rising more rapidly than college revenue from tuition and fundraising.[1]

Bright Side to Enrollment Declines

There is, however, a positive side to this situation. The potential market of nontraditional students, such as reentry women, has increased. Reentry women are de-

1. P. Kotler, *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1982), p. 15.

fined as those women 25 years of age or older who, at one time, interrupted their formal education and are now enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program. This increase has been both in total number enrolled and percentage enrolled. The enrollment rates of adult women have displayed a history of upward movement. Women over the age of 25 are one of the fastest-growing segments in college and university enrollment.

In order to stop enrollment slides and ensure institutional survival, administrators have turned to marketing. Marketing can be defined as "the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives."[2] More and more institutions recognize that marketing, if used properly, can do much for the institution and its customers.

Marketing in higher education emphasizes quality. Marketing requires that colleges and universities understand and focus on the things that they do best. "Marketing requires colleges to find out why students do not enroll and why they are not retained. A marketing program forces colleges to analyze curricula and programs and ensures that programs offered meet students' needs."[3] Responsible marketing "should lead to the more efficient delivery of both the messages and the services of higher education."[4] Marketing can direct the activities of colleges and universities toward the needs of the consumer and society. As a result, the consumer benefits and the institution is more likely to survive in the long run.

The purpose of marketing is to help organizations survive by serving their markets more effectively. Basically, marketing means identifying, selecting, and serving specific groups of consumers rather than trying to serve all consumers simultaneously. The group of consumers that a company or institution is trying to serve is called its *target market*. For colleges and universities, identifying the target market means realizing that "all students are not alike, do not have the same objectives or concerns, and do not have the same perceptions of and preferences for institutions of higher education."[5] Therefore, it is counterproductive to consider all prospective students in the same way.

2. Kotler, p. 6.
3. B. Knight and D. Johnson, "Marketing Higher Education," *Educational Record* 62, p. 28.
4. L. H. Litten, "Marketing Higher Education: Benefits and Risks for the American Academic System," *Journal of Higher Education* 51, p. 45.
5. Litten, p. 44.

Clarion's Recruitment Study

Most of the available research on marketing practices in higher education has been concerned with strategies to attract the traditional 18- to 24-year-old student. A need is developing for new marketing strategies that work effectively for reentry women, because the characteristics of reentry women differ not only from those of traditional-age students but also from those of reentry men.

At Clarion University, a study was conducted to identify the marketing practices that are being used by colleges and universities to recruit two distinct market segments—the traditional student and reentry women. The perceived effectiveness of these techniques also was measured.

The personal interview was used to collect the data in the study. The interview was selected because it can produce in-depth data and is more appropriate than a multiple-choice mail survey. In addition, the interview is flexible and produces more accurate responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purpose of the research and individual questions.

Because the interview method is expensive and time consuming, a relatively small sample was selected consisting of the 25 baccalaureate colleges and universities in southwestern Pennsylvania (including Allegheny County) and northwestern Pennsylvania. These areas corresponded to education planning regions 9, 12, and 13 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These regions were defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and were identified and used by Zemsky (1983) to define higher education markets in his research on the geographic limits of students' collegiate aspirations.[6]

These regions also were selected because they are vulnerable to projected enrollment declines of traditional-aged students. There are 26 baccalaureate colleges and universities in these regions. The University of Pittsburgh was not included in the study because the size and nature of the institution make it too different from the other schools in the sample. Branch campuses of institutions were not included. Admissions officers of all 25 institutions agreed to participate in the study.

Demography of Participating Colleges

Included in the sample were large and small institutions, public and private institutions, single-sex and coed institutions, and urban and rural institutions.

Eight of the 25 participant institutions had student enrollments of less than 1,000; 7 had between 1,000 and 2,500 students; 4 between 2,500 and 5,000 students; 5

6. R. Zemsky and P. Oedel, *The Structure of College Choice* (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1983).

between 5,000 and 10,000 students; and 1 had more than 10,000 students. Regarding sexual composition of the student body, four were women's colleges and 21 were coeducational. In the area of institutional control, 5 were public institutions and 20 were private. Concerning location, with "urban" defined as being in a city with a population greater than 100,000, 10 were located in urban areas and 15 were situated in rural areas (cities or towns with populations less than 100,000).

Description of the Survey Instrument

A two-part survey instrument, containing 16 defined marketing techniques, was used by the interviewer to conduct the interview. On Part I, respondents were asked to rate the degree to which each marketing technique had been used by the college or university in recruiting reentry women and traditional students. (Traditional students were added to determine whether or not recruiting techniques used for reentry women differed from those used for other market segments.) Respondents were also asked to rate the perceived effectiveness of each technique.

The resulting data were analyzed in terms of:

- The extent to which each marketing technique had been used to recruit reentry women and traditional students.
- The perceived effectiveness of each technique in recruiting reentry women and traditional students.

Scoring Part I of the survey instrument was done by dividing the scale into three kinds of responses: "low," "average," and "high." Numerical values were assigned to each as follows: low = 1, average = 2, high = 3. These were tallied and mean scores were computed for each technique and each scale for traditional students and reentry women. The *t* test was used to determine whether or not the two means (for traditional students and reentry women) for each technique were significantly different at a given probability level (see Table 3).

Seventeen open-ended questions were included in Part II of the survey instrument in order to obtain more specific information about the use of the marketing techniques to recruit reentry women and traditional students. Information received from the open-ended questions was used to supplement the empirical analysis of the first part of the survey. The data were analyzed to determine patterns, relationships, interactions, or underlying variables that were not evident in Part I.

The strategy of analyzing the data was to review the information for each institution one item at a time and to make observations. After the item-by-item review was completed, comparisons and relationships were identified and described.

Results of the Study

Personal recruitment, market positions, and differentiation were the three marketing techniques most frequently used to recruit traditional students (see Table 1). These were followed by market planning, market research, and promotion. Marketing consultants, distribution, and advertising were techniques used the least to recruit traditional students. Seven of the marketing techniques ranked higher than the marketing concept.

The three most frequently used techniques for recruiting traditional students also were perceived to be the most effective. These were personal recruitment, market positioning, and differentiation. The techniques used the least were also judged to be the least effective. These techniques were marketing consultants, distribution, and advertising.

TABLE 1. RANK ORDER OF USAGE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SURVEY ITEMS FOR TRADITIONAL STUDENTS (ALL CASES COMBINED)

Marketing Technique	Mean Usage Rating	Marketing Technique	Mean Effectiveness Rating
Personal recruitment	2.920	Personal recruitment	2.960
Market positioning	2.720	Market positioning	2.520
Differentiation	2.640	Differentiation	2.520
Market planning	2.560	Market planning	2.480
Market research	2.560	Marketing information	2.480
Promotion	2.560	Market research	2.480
Marketing information	2.520	Marketing concept	2.440
Marketing concept	2.360	Promotion	2.360
Marketing segmentation	2.320	Market segmentation	2.320
Marketing organization	2.320	Marketing organization	2.120
Program development	2.240	Program development	2.080
Pricing	2.160	Pricing	2.040
Publicity	2.120	Publicity	1.960
Advertising	2.080	Advertising	1.920
Distribution	1.960	Distribution	1.920
Marketing consultants	1.680	Marketing consultants	1.600

TABLE 2. RANK ORDER OF USAGE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SURVEY ITEMS FOR REENTRY WOMEN (ALL CASES COMBINED)

Marketing Technique	Mean Usage Rating	Marketing Technique	Mean Effectiveness Rating
Program development	1.760	Personal recruitment	1.640
Advertising	1.720	Differentiation	1.640
Market positioning	1.720	Market planning	1.640
Differentiation	1.680	Advertising	1.600
Market planning	1.640	Market segmentation	1.600
Personal recruitment	1.600	Market positioning	1.600
Publicity	1.600	Marketing concept	1.560
Market segmentation	1.560	Program development	1.560
Market research	1.560	Publicity	1.560
Marketing concept	1.520	Pricing	1.520
Pricing	1.520	Distribution	1.520
Distribution	1.480	Market research	1.520
Promotion	1.440	Promotion	1.400
Marketing information	1.360	Marketing information	1.400
Marketing organization	1.360	Marketing organization	1.288
Marketing consultants	1.240	Marketing consultants	1.160

TABLE 3. t RATIO OF MEANS OF SURVEY ITEMS FOR TRADITIONAL AND REENTRY STUDENTS (ALL CASES COMBINED)

Marketing Technique	Usage t Ratio*	Effectiveness t Ratio
1. Marketing concept	4.257	4.745
2. Program development	2.295	2.701
3. Pricing	3.216	2.487
4. Distribution	2.295	1.852*
5. Personal recruitment	7.333	6.678
6. Marketing consultant	3.091	2.681
7. Advertising	1.737*	1.693*
8. Market segmentation	4.106	3.674
9. Publicity	2.831	2.089
10. Market positioning	5.477	4.822
11. Differentiation	4.370	4.176
12. Promotion	5.527	5.400
13. Marketing planning	5.059	4.452
14. Marketing information system	6.820	6.263
15. Market research	5.222	5.136
16. Marketing organization	5.400	4.938

* t ratio not significant at .05 level

Program development, advertising, and market positioning were the three marketing techniques most frequently used to recruit reentry women (see Table 2). These were followed by differentiation, market planning, personal recruitment, and publicity. Of the 16 techniques, 9 ranked higher than the marketing concept. Marketing consultants, a marketing organization, and a marketing information system were the least used techniques.

Personal recruitment, differentiation, and market planning were perceived to be the most effective marketing techniques for recruiting reentry women, although they were not the most frequently used techniques. The relatively lower effectiveness ratings of program development, advertising, and market positioning may be due to high expectations for these techniques. It must also be recognized that the 25 institutions had inadequate means of evaluating the effectiveness of their marketing techniques.

When usage and perceived effectiveness of the marketing techniques for recruiting traditional students were compared with those for recruiting reentry women, significant differences appeared that can be explained by the fact that only 6 of the 25 participating colleges were actively recruiting reentry women; 19 did little or nothing to recruit reentry women.

The 6 colleges that were actively recruiting reentry women were using marketing to a greater degree to reach reentry women than were the remaining 19 participants. Not all of the 6 colleges, however, were using all 16 marketing techniques. To some extent, all 6 were using the following 8 marketing techniques to recruit reentry women: marketing concept, program development, personal recruitment, advertising, market segmentation,

market positioning, differentiation, and market planning. The remaining 8 techniques were being used to recruit reentry women by some but not all of the 6 institutions. Of the 8 techniques being used by all 6 colleges to recruit reentry women, not all of the 8 techniques were being used frequently.

Responses to Part II of the survey indicated that 6 of the 25 institutions were oriented toward satisfying the needs of reentry women. Four of the 6 were private women's colleges with enrollments of less than 1,000 students; the 2 coeducational colleges were also private schools. Four of the 6 colleges were located in cities with populations greater than 100,000; 2 were situated in more rural areas.

According to the responses to the open-ended questions, not much marketing activity was being directed toward reentry women. The colleges that were seriously trying to recruit reentry women did use a variety of marketing techniques, including differentiation, pricing, market research, advertising, publicity, and marketing organization. Admissions officers of 19 institutions stated that they were not actively or consciously recruiting reentry women because of lack of resources or lack of interest. The 5 public institutions were included in this group.

Marketing to recruit traditional students was used by every institution in the sample. However, some schools were restricted in their marketing activities by limited resources. Each of the 25 responding institutions recognized the importance of marketing in higher education and acknowledged the need to use various marketing techniques to recruit traditional students. From responses to the open-ended questions, the study showed that all of the institutions used personal recruitment, publicity, market positioning, differentiation, and marketing research to some extent.

Interesting Conclusions about Recruiting Reentry Women

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of this study:

- **Admissions officers of 25 baccalaureate colleges and universities regarded marketing as a positive idea and used various marketing techniques.** Generally speaking, the officers in this study recognized the importance of marketing in higher education and were working toward its more widespread and professional application.
- **Most of the institutions in this study have not, however, adopted the marketing concept.** They have not moved into the marketing stage in the evolution of marketing management but remain in the sales stage. This is evidenced by the high usage and effectiveness rankings of personal recruitment. In recruiting traditional students, personal recruiting and promotion rank higher than the

marketing concept. In recruiting reentry women, personal recruitment, advertising, and publicity rank higher than the marketing concept.

- **To recruit traditional students, admissions officers used the marketing techniques that they perceived to be the most effective.** This is indicated by the similarity between the usage and effectiveness rankings. This was not necessarily the case in the recruitment of reentry women.
- **Most baccalaureate colleges and universities were not interested in recruiting reentry women.** In this study, only 6 of the 25 participating institutions were actively recruiting reentry women, and 19 were not.
- **The institutions that were experiencing difficulties in maintaining acceptable enrollment levels were most likely to recruit reentry women.** Of the 6 colleges recruiting reentry women, 5 had fewer than 1,000 students.
- **Women's colleges were more involved in identifying and satisfying the needs of reentry women.** In this study, 4 of the 6 colleges recruiting reentry women were women's colleges.
- **Public institutions were not seriously recruiting reentry women.** Of the 6 institutions recruiting reentry women, all were private.
- **Geographic location may have been a factor in an institution's decision to recruit reentry women.** Of the 6 colleges recruiting reentry women, 4 had urban locations; 2 were situated in rural areas.
- **Most of the colleges and universities did not have adequate data to evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing efforts.** This applied to the recruitment of both traditional students and reentry women. However, an institution was more likely to have information about traditional students than about reentry women.

Because of the uncertain future of American higher education, studies such as this one are essential. Although this study does have shortcomings, it provides a point of departure for research that is necessary if colleges and universities are to survive in an increasingly grim market situation.

About the Author

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KANSAS UNIVERSITIES' SUPPORT SYSTEMS HELP NONTRADITIONAL FEMALE STUDENTS

Julianne Ducommun Cooper
Robert J. Mattox

Today, the typical college freshman class will not just be filled with the bright, eager, young faces of 18-year-olds but with the mature faces of equally eager, older nontraditional students. This article focuses specifically on the needs and pursuits of nontraditional female students attending college or returning for the "second time around."

The typical nontraditional student is 25 years of age or older, either just beginning college or returning after at least a two-year absence. Today, these older, nontraditional students, or reentry students, are seen in nearly every university in the country. The older female student is unique, usually between the ages of 30 and 49, and brings with her complex problems. What she has faced in order to return to the classroom and what she will continue to deal with throughout her college career does not fit into the typical freshman core of expectations. The university will benefit from her attendance only if it can sufficiently recognize and help her fulfill her needs.

A survey was developed and conducted on the campus of Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas, to determine the needs of and services requested by nontraditional students. The general outcome of this survey indicated that female nontraditional students are the most in need of student personnel assistance and support. So it is with this information in mind that we look at the needs of this specific group and determine what support systems are available at this time or should be developed.

Who Is the Female Reentry College Student?

Before college administrators can determine how best to assist female reentry students, it is necessary to recognize certain common characteristics of these students. The women are between the ages of 30 and 49, have attended college previously but left because of marriage or financial need, are still involved in their marriages, and have children living at home or soon to be moving out.[1] For these adults, college is not a way of replacing marriage or family ties but a way to enhance their lives. Women at this time often feel that they are needed less and that their advancing age gives them little time to achieve their long sought-after goals.[2]

Reentry women are those that return to the university during what is referred to as the "middle motherhood" years. This term is related more to the situation women find themselves in rather than to a strict age. It is a period when the constant challenge of raising children is lessened, when the husband's early career struggles are smoothing out into a settled but time-consuming involvement, and when the woman may see herself as only an extension of her husband and family. Her interests and friendships all revolve around the home and family, and her own personal growth has been put on hold for several years. Her children require less physical care and, with the settling in of relationships and routines, she now has time available for things other than family. But because less time is required for her to operate her home and care for her children, she often perceives herself as less useful and may even become confused about her identity. Now she may look toward her earlier dreams and aspirations of a career to give her life more meaning, but this time her hopes may be overshadowed by lack of confidence and the worries of aging. What evolves is a second important period for career exploration, and the university becomes the agent for this growth and exploration.

Reentry women are serious students who hope that a renewed attempt at the college experience will help answer some of their life questions. Many of these women had high career aspirations before marriage and parenthood and now feel that they can revive those aspirations.[3] Most are concerned with future employability, a desire for increased social contact and meaningful activity, a need for renewed self-confidence, some redefining of identity, and a desire for financial independence. Not only does the reentry female student bring these insecurities and aspirations with her to class each day, but she must deal with the everyday world of home and family before she can walk into the classroom. She has to manage the practical problems of child care, home care, family support, and, in many cases, financial support.

What Distinguishes Nontraditionals from Traditionals?

Factors that distinguish older, nontraditional students from traditional students include a greater sense of purpose, financial commitment, and the awareness of conscious choices. The financial commitment involved encourages nontraditional students to feel that time and effort must not be wasted and that they can be equally demanding of their professors as of themselves. Because academic life demands a great deal of their time, there is much juggling of work and family responsibilities. And just being older gives them different experiences and a different perspective on life. Because they often lack same-age relationships in the university environment, the usual camaraderie between students may be different for nontraditional students.[4]

Although all students share some common goals in the university environment, the pressure to meet them may be felt more by older students. All are concerned with future employability, increased social contact, meaningful activities, a stronger development or renewal of self-confidence, some redefining of identity, and eventually financial independence.

How Student Affairs Organizations Can Help

Student personnel organizations can help reentry female students in numerous ways. Beginning with a proactive admissions process, admissions counselors can be active in their approach, encouragement, and recruitment of older students. Statistics show that 40 percent of all students enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States are older than 25; by 1990, that number will have increased to at least 50 percent.[5] Even now,

1. Helen S. Farmer and Leslie J. Fyans, "Married Women's Achievement and Career Motivations: The Influence of Some Environmental and Psychological Variables," *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, Vol. 7 (1982-83): 358-372.
2. Judith Berman Brandenberg, "The Needs of Women Returning to School," *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (September, 1974): 11-19.
3. H.S. Astin, "Continuing Education and the Development of Adult Women," *The Counseling Psychologist*, Vol. 6 (1976): 55-60.
4. Carol Kehr Tittle and Elenor Rubin Denker, *Returning Women Students in Higher Education—Defining Policy Issues* (New York: Praeger, 1980). Donna Rechler-Antion, "Qualitative Differences Between Adult and Younger Students," *NASPA Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Winter 1986): 58-62.
5. C.B. Aslanian, "Marketing Analysis is the Key to Finding Adult Students," *The Admissions Strategist*, 1985, Vol. 3, 39-45.

Emporia State University, a small midwestern state university in a rural agrarian location with a student population of about 5,000, has a nontraditional population of about 22 percent. Larger institutions that do not actively recruit nontraditionals have populations of 18 to 20 percent. With high school graduating classes decreasing in size, admissions counselors at these higher education institutions are going to need to actively recruit older students. Once the initial recruiting process has begun, prospective reentry candidates must complete admission forms and be evaluated for admission. Admissions personnel need to recognize that adults' basic student skills sometimes are rusty and the usual standardized tests, such as the SAT, ACT, GRE, and other college entrance exams, may be quite inappropriate and even discriminate against older students. Five to 10 years can mean a tremendous change in high school academic requirements as well as college requirements. The older student might not have been required to take classes that are expected now of incoming freshmen, and they also might not be familiar with the new technology that abounds in the high school and college curriculums today.

Admissions offices should find and use admissions tests that will fairly evaluate the incoming adult student, as well as offer specific counselors for these students. Some universities even delay the administration of the ACT exams until further along in the student's academic career to enable them to adjust to the college environment. Special counselors should conduct orientation workshops for the reentry students and their families to help prepare them for the changes that can be expected. Basically the admissions offices must be proactive in their recruitment of nontraditional students and make them feel a welcome and vital part of the campus environment.

The whole family will be affected by the decisions that the reentry female student makes. As the student becomes more involved in her schoolwork, some aspects of her life will change, and it is her family who will see and feel these changes first. Roles and tasks once assumed by the student will be reassigned, and some family members and even friends may feel threatened by these changes and resent the student. An orientation program geared especially to the reentry student and her family would increase their awareness of the need for family support. Some of the insecurities of these women will be heightened by their having to rely on college services that are geared for younger students with very different life-styles and needs. Many students, and even student advisers, may feel that the mature student shouldn't need to ask counselors, teachers, or even other students for help.

Organizations at Kansas State University

Kansas State University at Manhattan, Kansas, has an adult student population of only about 1,600 undergraduates and 800 graduates. This is not a majority of the student population, yet Kansas State does make sure it keeps up with the changing needs of this adult group. To address these needs, the university developed a program and a handbook specifically for adult undergraduates. This handbook includes a very positive and encouraging statement about the older student and his or her potential within the university environment, which states that 60 percent of adult undergraduates earned a B or better average compared to only 35 percent of traditional-age students. The handbook presents all the services and organizations available to adult learners and encourages them to utilize these services. A group, the Association of Adults Returning to School (AARTS), also has been formed to provide a connection for mature students. Members of this group meet for lunch and listen to speakers talk about specific concerns of adult students; afterwards they share their university experiences.

Organizations at Emporia State University

Emporia State University is a much smaller institution than Kansas State at Manhattan but, there too, a growing response is being made to the needs of the older student. Emporia has always enjoyed a large nontraditional population consisting of returning educational professionals updating their credentials and pursuing advanced degrees. But now it is experiencing a growing population of undergraduate adult students who require more services and stronger support systems.

Some of Emporia's adult students are working with Washburn University of Topeka, Kansas, to establish a statewide networking system and organization. What was formerly the "Nontrad Club" is being changed to the Nu Tau Sigma organization, with hopes that other state universities will join this organization. Then a networking system could be made to benefit adult students at all the universities. The group involved at Emporia State recognizes that they need to use their group voice to make themselves a force in the university. They have begun by electing a member to the Student Senate, and they are working toward having a member as one of the student ambassadors for the university. They also have updated their constitution, developed a monthly newsletter, are participating in community projects, and are seeking ways of making other students, faculty, and community members aware of the potential of such a group. They have committed themselves to a proactive attitude and to public recognition. There is still a great deal of work to do because many adult students do not know what could be available to them if they had a strong voice in this group.

Like many universities, Emporia State broadened its awareness of women's needs by having a women's group and women's resource room on campus. The resource

room is filled with books and information available to any interested students. Emporia's women's group actively supports Women's Week in February and brings in special speakers for panels and study groups. This year, a Susan B. Anthony Scholarship was awarded to a young woman student during the Women's Week activities.

Financial Aid: Serious Issue for All Students

Financial aid is a very serious consideration for every student. Because this need is not eliminated by age, it should not be overlooked when appraising the finances of the older student, especially the reentry female student. In 1987, although more and more students needed financial aid, the federal government was even more reluctant to participate in awarding financial aid and state governments were less and less able to offer financial aid.

Recently, the Legislature of the State of Kansas passed a bill allowing the state to adopt and support a vocational educational scholarship program. Qualified candidates are awarded a financial grant-in-aid by the state based on these minimal criteria: resident of Kansas; high school graduate or possessing educational development credentials; enrolled or accepted in a vocational education program operated by one of the designated educational institutions; qualified on the basis of a competitive examination of ability and aptitude.

Educational grants to vocational education students may be as much as $500 per year. The State of Kansas adopted this program to provide an educational incentive for nontraditional students who are suffering the most in the economically devastated Kansas agriculture and crude oil industries. "Nontraditional" is defined as the Kansas farmer and his or her family who have had to either sell out or cut back their operations and must learn a new skill to survive in today's competitive society. Such grants can virtually pay for the cost of tuition for one year's retraining in any designated training facility. Those receiving grants may train in any area offered by the school of their choice, including graphic arts, automotive technology, industrial science, cosmetology, nursing, and a wide range of other opportunities.

The typical financial aid forms do not fit the circumstances of the reentry student. Many female adult students do not have the financial support of spouses and should not have to include his income on the forms. Typical financial aid forms do not take into consideration the financial commitments of the reentry student as well as projected financial needs. Older students need a separate form that requests appropriate information and reference materials.

Many grants and loan programs are not available to reentry students because of their part-time enrollment or previous financial earnings. "The average undergraduate who receives state aid is expected to get $1,034, compared to $947 last year," which is still not enough for a student with family responsibilities.[6] Special funds need to be available and, with them, new sources for these funds. Financial aid counselors might consider local businesses as sources of aid, as well as national businesses and business organizations.

Other Campus Support Systems

Once the initial admissions process is completed, the reentry female student faces the practical task of scheduling her classes and coordinating these with child care and perhaps even an outside job. For this student the

6. Robin Wilson, "State Aid for Needy Undergraduates Expected to Rise 13 Percent This Year," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Vol. XXXIII (22), (1987): 21-28.

usual class time slots may not work successfully, and her sequential progress of course work each semester may be slowed down, if not stopped. This increases the difficulties involved in obtaining financial aid for the coming semesters. Programming of college courses should be creative to meet the variety of needs of all students enrolled.

Besides flexible programming, several other items requested primarily by reentry female students, seconded by nontraditional male students, can easily become part of the academic environment if they are not already. These include:

- university-sponsored child care
- a student center for nontraditionals, where all relevant information and advising might be available
- financial advisement
- major and minor course selection advisement
- educational and vocational counseling
- credit by exam for life experiences
- campus information referral service for returning students
- leadership communication skills
- peer counselors in all the student personnel fields and offices
- workshops in exam skills, study skills, time analysis, goal setting
- workshops for faculty.

Since child care and job hours are the biggest block to regular attendance for reentry female students, the university can offer assistance. Many universities already have developed a quality child-care facility located on campus for their students. There are many ways to make this a productive experience for the children, their parents, and traditional students by involving them in the educational aspects of the center. Other universities need to seriously consider this option.

Also necessary are job placement centers, as well as student jobs that consider the skills and the needs of the older student. The reentry student needs the support of these organizations.

Reentry student support groups should be developed to give these students an opportunity to enter into friendships with their peers, discuss common problems, give as well as gain support, and obtain information specific to their needs. These could be similar to the aforementioned Nu Tau Sigma group at Emporia State or the AARTS group at Kansas State. The university might give workshops in the community on life-styles and change and have reentry student support groups work with the community as well as the college.[7] The community should be encouraged to look at education as a constantly growing and expanding experience that will enrich their lives.

The College Placement Office should work to communicate the special skills and assets of adult students to businessmen, schools, and other agencies seeking new personnel. By engaging in these activities, both the reentry student and the university will benefit. It will eventually increase the quality and number of students enrolled, as well as improve the job expertise of the university staff. The involvement of the university in the community will eventually create a new pool of resources for the university.

Conclusion

Institutions would do well to consider and provide the kind of support services discussed here, especially for reentry adult female students.

In-service training may be needed for staff to extend this extra help to the reentry female student, and this training should concern itself with the various aspects of discrimination and basic needs of older students. Staff should also investigate appropriate and fair testing methods and evaluations, improved informational forms for enrollment and financial aids, and beneficial counseling topics and workshops for the reentry student. In the long run, it will be the attitudes of the college staff that will encourage or discourage the incoming adults, especially the reentry student. It is not enough to creatively package a nontraditional student program if the university doesn't consistently fulfill the promises of that program.

7. Janilee Wheaton and Robinson Daniel, "Responding to the Needs of Reentry Women: A Comprehensive Campus Model," *NASPA Journal*, Vol. 21 (Fall 1983): 44-51.

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ADULT LEARNING SERVICES

In 1980, the College Board established the Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS) with a twofold purpose: to assist colleges with recruitment, instruction, and assessment of adult students and to assist adults with decisions about college study. OALS carries out several activities to support its purposes. It:

- conducts research to advance knowledge about adult learning
- develops and tests new ideas for services
- disseminates knowledge about adult learning.

OALS provides assistance to colleges and individual adults in the following ways.

Technical Services

Community Assessment Program (CAP)

A major service offered by OALS, this program is a five-part market survey for colleges, universities, and organizations that want to determine the supply and demand for adult learning in their communities. It can help institutions improve or expand their services to adults.

CAP is unique. Most surveys of adult learning deal with "need" or "interest" and usually yield results that grossly overestimate what adults actually do. CAP is not a needs assessment program; rather, it examines the actual demand for learning. In order to acquire accurate information about probable adult learning behavior, CAP surveys adults to find out what they have studied in the past year and what study plans they have for the following year. CAP also surveys organizations to identify their actual plans for further education and training.

OALS contends that a college can attract more adults if the college understands what adults will study, when they will study, and where they will study. During the past six years, CAP has served more than 40 colleges—two-year and four-year, large and small, public and independent—in all regions of the country.

Doing Business with Business

This service can help colleges form profitable relationships with local companies for the education and training of employees, through credit or noncredit courses taught at the colleges or the companies. Going beyond traditional arrangements involving tuition reimbursement, faculty exchange, or facility use, contract training enables colleges to work directly with an organization to provide instruction for its employees, clients, or members.

Through its CAP service, OALS staff have interviewed hundreds of businesses, government agencies, and voluntary associations to locate contract training opportunities for client colleges. Now, with Doing Business with Business, OALS helps colleges do the same thing—select companies to be interviewed, conduct telephone interviews with management officials to "screen-in" those most likely to contract with the college, schedule and conduct 12 face-to-face interviews with company decision-makers, and provide the results of the process in a final report.

Training

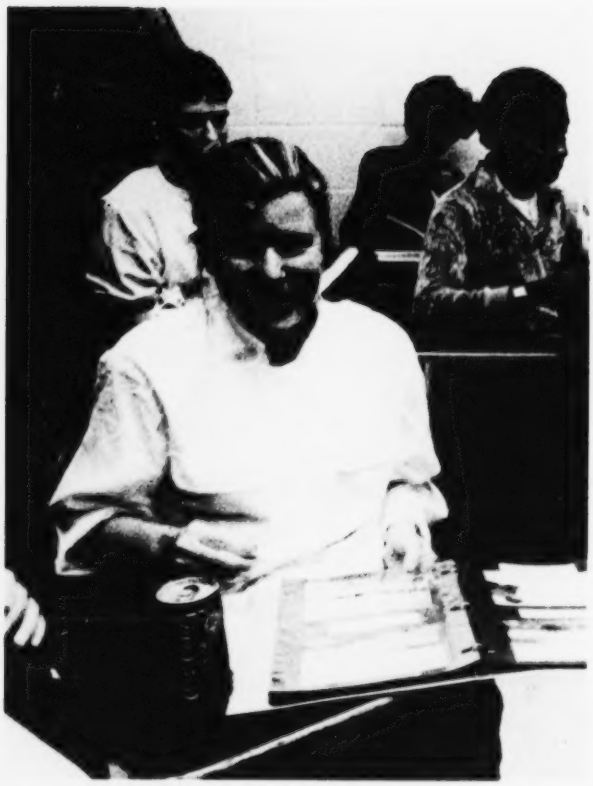
OALS Seminars

For the past six years, OALS has conducted workshops and seminars for college administrators on a variety of topics dealing with adult learning. Held in major cities throughout the country, the seminars have attracted more than 2,500 participants, representing more than 1,000 institutions. Among the topics presented have been "Marketing to Adult Learners," "Recruiting Adult Students," "Making Business and Industry Your New Clientele," "Expanding Educational Services with Business and Industry," and "Enrollment Management and the Adult Student." The latter topic became the basis for the articles in this publication, written by the leaders of the OALS seminar.

The seminars, held during a two-day period, provide participants with practical information on how to develop or improve their programs for adults. In the spring of 1988, OALS will offer the following seminars:

- **Marketing Higher Education to Adults,** an advanced seminar on how to use the latest marketing techniques to increase enrollment of adult students.
  March 14-15, Washington, D.C.
  March 21-22, Orlando, Florida
  April 11-12, Chicago, Illinois
- **Business Education Partnerships,** a national conference on how colleges are working with business and industry to deliver educational services.
  April 7-8, New York, New York

In the fall of 1988, OALS once again will offer the seminar on "Enrollment Management and the Adult Student." Locations and dates are yet to be determined.



Workshops Where You Work

These workshops are special one-day, on-site events held throughout the year at the request of individual colleges. These professional development sessions for administrators and faculty members are conducted by OALS staff or outside experts, depending on the topic and the objectives of the college.

Institute for the Management of Lifelong Education (MLE)

This institute is a cooperative effort between the College Board and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. It helps leaders of higher education determine new directions, define changing roles, and implement lifelong education effectively. The two-week summer program serves approximately 100 administrators yearly.

Publications

OALS is a major publisher in the field of adult learning. Its publications include research and development project reports, policy studies, and "how-to" books for adults and colleges. Among the publications distributed through OALS are:

- *Americans in Transition: Life Changes as Reasons for Adult Learning*
- *The College Board Guide to Going to College While Working*
- *Training by Contract: College-Employer Profiles*
- *Finding Financial Resources for Adult Learners: Profiles for Practice*
- *Paying for Your Education: A Guide for Adult Learners*
- *Improving Financial Aid Services for Adults: A Program Guide*
- *Higher Education in Rural America*
- *Independent Scholarship: Promise, Problems, and Prospects*

If you wish to receive additional information about any of these activities, please complete the postage-paid response card and return it to OALS. To receive announcements of upcoming workshops, or further information on training activities, contact Elena K. Morris, OALS Conference Director.

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The Admissions Strategist
The College Board
45 Columbus Avenue
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